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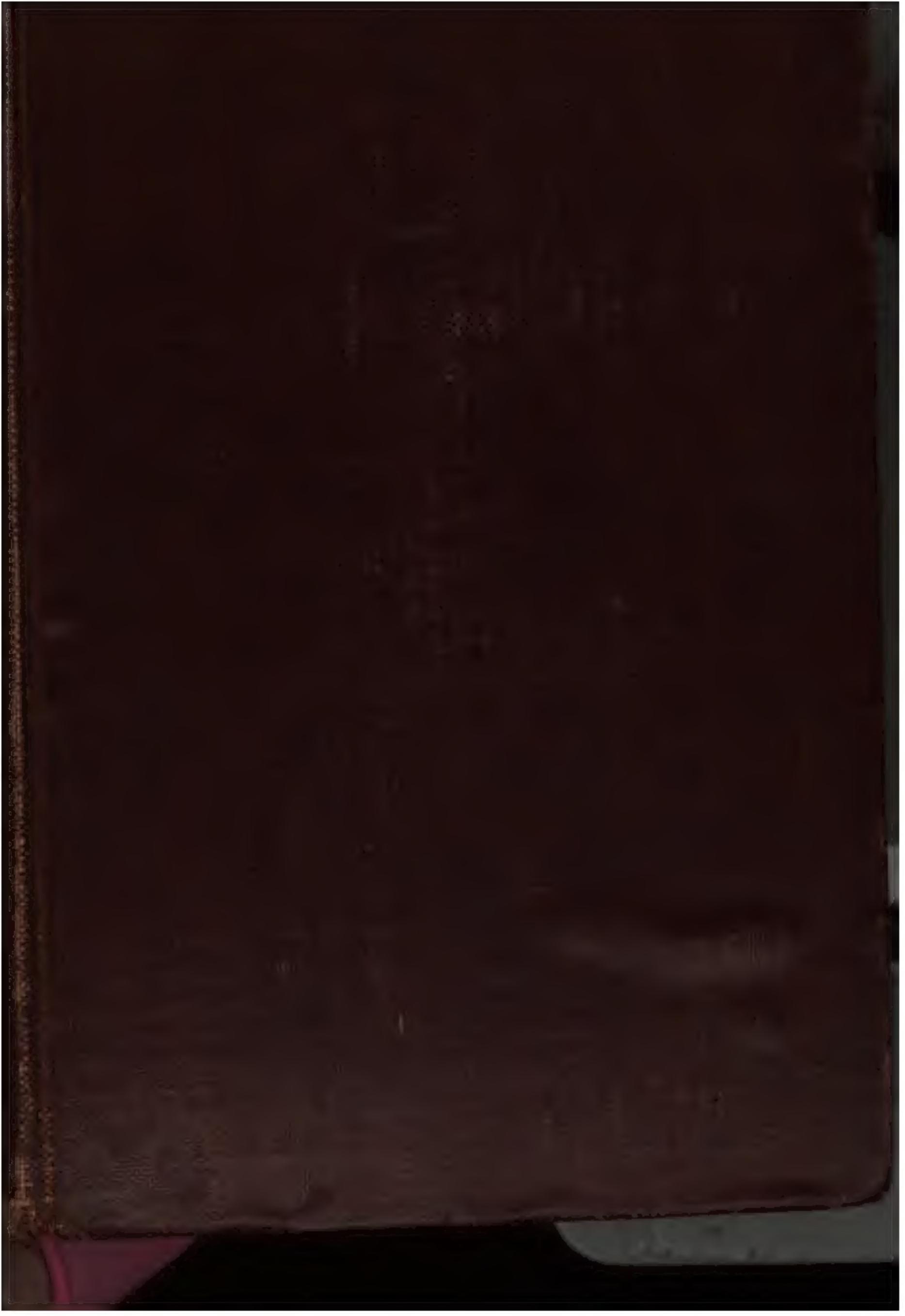
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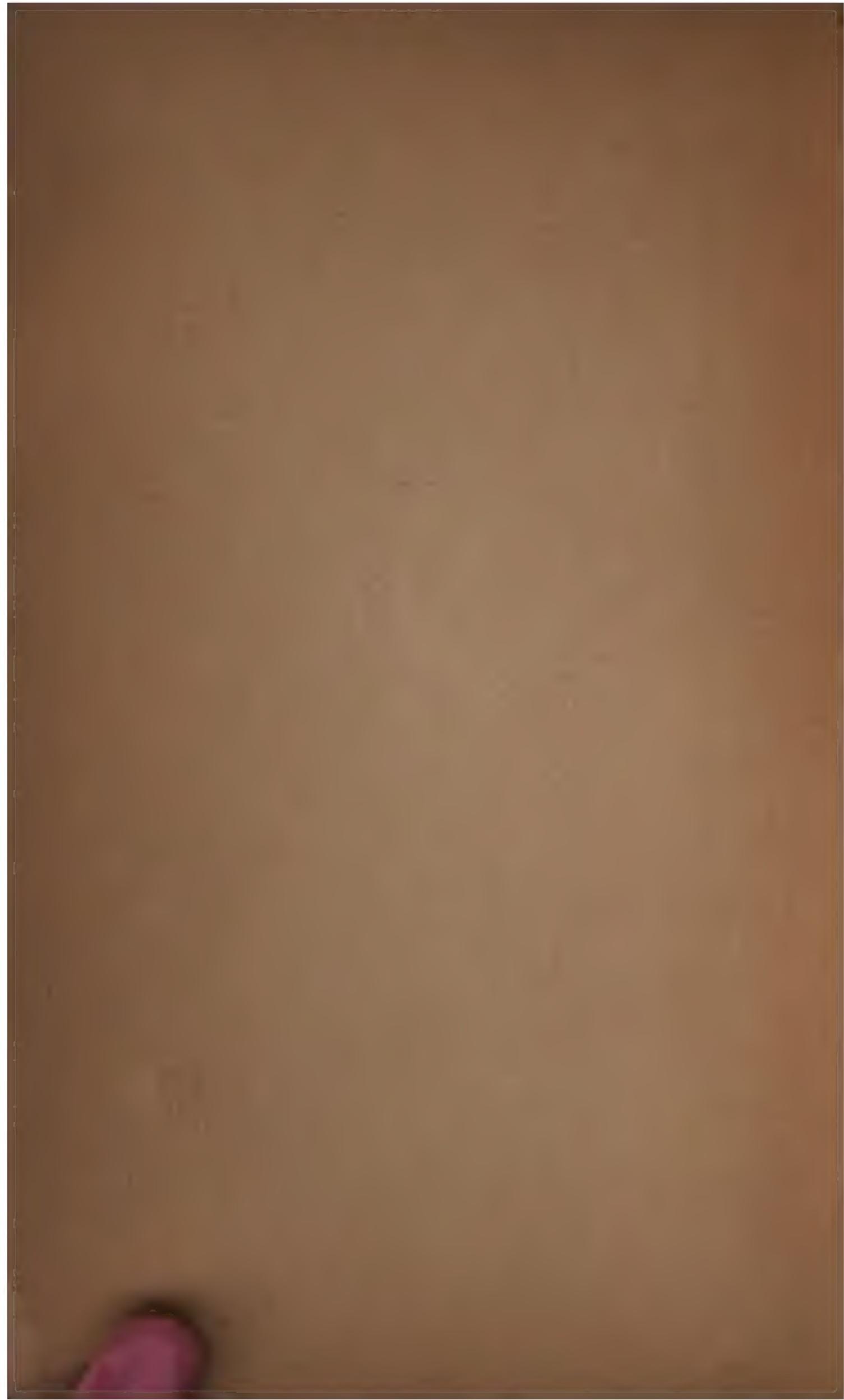
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# SHAKESPEARE'S STORY OF HIS LIFE

BY

C. CREIGHTON, M.D.

*Alonso.* I long  
To hear the story of your life, which must  
Take the ear strangely.

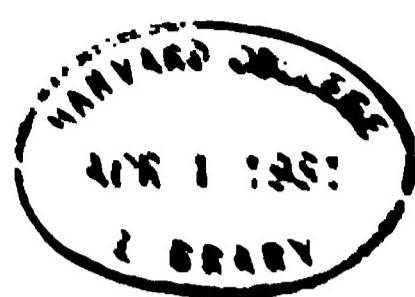
*Prospero.* I'll deliver all.

THE TEMPEST.

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George Michael French

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## NOTE

Chapters I.-III. are reprinted, with alterations and additions, from two articles in *Blackwood's Magazine*, May and June 1901. The author desires to acknowledge the courtesy of the proprietors of the magazine in granting permission.

## INTRODUCTION

To show the scope of this book, and what the reader may expect to find novel in it, the shortest way will be to tell how it grew in the author's hands, and how the discoveries which it contains came to be made one after another. Four years ago the late Mr. Samuel Butler was good enough to give me a copy of his book on Shakespeare's Sonnets (1899), as he had given me other of his writings which I prized. I read it, at first merely with the view of forming an opinion which I might express to the author ; but soon became interested, indeed fascinated, by the problem of the Sonnets, which I had paid no attention to before, having been always too much repelled by the obscurity of the poems to read any but a few of them. After reading Butler's twelve chapters, from which I gained for the first time a general view of the several theories, including his own, I proceeded, according to his advice, to study the Sonnets themselves, using the original text, which he had conveniently appended to his volume in a facsimile of the precious quarto of 1609. I came soon to agree with my guide that "a story of some sort is staring us in the face" ; but it was not long before I saw that Butler's story of an unscrupulous young fellow named Hews or Hughes would never do, if only for the reason that the youth addressed in the Sonnets was not a scamp, whatever else he was. On turning to the essay of James Boaden (1832), I found that some evidence had already been put together, supporting an

## SHAKESPEARE'S STORY OF HIS LIFE

earlier guess of Heywood Bright (1818), that the youth addressed was William Herbert, afterwards third Earl of Pembroke, "the most universally loved and esteemed of any man of that age" (Clarendon). But Boaden's proof was far from positive, so that no one had been able to press the identification home with confidence, not even the late Mr. Tyler with all his new matter touching the lady in the case. At length I discovered that the proper name *Hews* in the allusive line of S. 20—

A man in hew, all *Hews* in his controlling—

which was a stumbling-block to some and a stepping-stone to others (Byron, for example), was really inserted by Shakespeare as a punning clue to the identity of Lord Herbert, one of whose courtesy titles was Lord Fitzhew. This use of one of the Pembroke baronies to pun upon was confirmed by the next discovery, that the frequent use of *Rose* (as in the opening couplet of the opening sonnet) was also playfully meant in allusion to another of Lord Herbert's titles, Lord Ros of Kendal, which made a good pet name as my lord Rose. Thirdly, I found that the mock-sublime 19th Sonnet, "Devouring Time, blunt thou the Lion's paws," was a witty exercise upon the Pembroke heraldry; and that the famous "Fair, kind, and true" Sonnet was a series of variations, no less ingenious than elegant, upon two of the Pembroke mottoes—the first half of the sonnet upon the principal motto of the family, *Ung je servirai*, "I shall keep one"; the next lines upon the motto of the Parrs (the maternal ancestry), *Amour avec loyaute*; whilst the *envoi* united the two in a climax of witty compliment :

Fair, kind, and true have often lived alone,  
Which three till now never kept seat in one.

By these new proofs I became so confident that Lord Herbert was the man, that I looked for and soon found several sonnets corresponding with known dates in his

## INTRODUCTION

biography, and with historical events in his youth, such as the death of Spenser on 8th January 1599, and the rebellion of Lord Essex on 8th February 1601; so that it became easy to fix the three years' period over which the Sonnets avowedly ranged as the years from 1598 to 1601. In this time-scheme the series of nine sonnets on the Rival Poet fell in the early summer of 1599, and the real occasion of them, I saw, was the vacancy in the office and pension of the Poet Laureate on the death of Spenser. The rival poet had been guessed by Boaden in 1832 to be Samuel Daniel, on the ground of a risky inference that Daniel must have been mixed up in the necromancies of Dr. Dee and Thomas Aleyn, and was therefore pointed at in the sonnet with the caustic reference to the other poet's inspiration from nocturnal spirits. Boaden guessed right, and the ground of his guessing was itself good. But he did not see that Daniel's identity is concealed under half a dozen Shakespearian witticisms, including a most ingenious anagram upon his name mingled with the names of the two necromancers—namely, "*Alien* pen," the word which was printed in italics with a capital making Daniel without D (Dr. Dee, who had removed to Manchester) but with Aleyn. I was next able to show that Daniel, towards the end of 1599, believed himself to be the new Laureate, but that he never got his patent for the office (as Malone had proved already), although he got some benefice or other emolument from the Queen in lieu of the pension from the Treasury. This refusal to Shakespeare of the Laurel Crown, which no one hitherto had detected in the sonnets upon the Rival Poet, accounted for the caustic and impassioned series next following, of which the first is "Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing." But there was a great deal more behind which I did not discover until a year or two after I first wrote on the Sonnets (without my name, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, May and June, 1901).

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The lady who is addressed in the shorter series of sonnets, printed as an independent sequence after those to Lord Herbert, and who is alluded to also in several of the principal series, was guessed by the late Mr. Thomas Tyler some twenty years ago to have been Mary Fitton, a favourite maid-of-honour of the Queen. It seemed to me that Mr. Tyler's probabilities, stated in his considerate scholarly way, were sufficient for assent ; and it gave me much pleasure to be able to clinch them for him by a documentary proof from outside. The position as he left it in his latest writing was, that Mistress Fitton had actually been the mistress of Lord Pembroke, that she resembled in features the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, who had been the poet's mistress and had been stolen from him by his friend, and that her surname was pointed at in one or more punning allusions in the sonnets written to her. But there had been some doubt about her likeness in the portraits at Arbury Hall, Warwickshire, as well as a want of any external evidence that Shakespeare had ever known this lady ; so that Dr. Furnivall, writing in *The Theatre* on 1st December 1897, concluded : "Though the suggestion of William Herbert and Mary Fitton is the best yet made, there is nothing like proof or good evidence that they are the folk we want, and there is much evidence against them. Their value is, that they are the types of the persons we are in search of. . . . They have not yet been identified, and probably never will be."

In using the Calendar of State Papers, I had noticed in the index an entry of the name of Henry, second Earl of Pembroke, as alluded to in a MS. ballad of the year 1601, which I suspected to be a mistake for William Herbert, his son ; and on inspecting the original in the Record Office I saw at once that the ballad contained at least one historical event, the Proclamation of 9th February 1601, which was subsequent to the death of the second Earl, and that the allusion in it to "Pembroke" was in respect of the very affair

## INTRODUCTION

of Mistress Fitton, in which William Herbert was known from authentic letters of the same date to have been mixed up. The ballad is in the old rhyming measure of Skelton, written on two sides of a quarto sheet, with a clean copy upon another quarto sheet, both being bound up amongst the ordinary State Papers of the first months of the year 1601. It is a ballad of gossip of Queen Elizabeth's Court, with numerous witty and punning allusions to persons, including the Lord Chamberlain (the second Lord Hunsdon), Sir Robert Cecil ("little Cecil"), and his brother, Lord Burghley (the "burly clown"), Fulke Greville, Sir John Stanhope, the Earl of Bedford, and Sir Walter Raleigh. The second verse is devoted entirely to the scandal in the Maid's Chamber, under the allegory of a startled herd of deer ; it describes the alarm of the Comptroller of the Household, the wrath of the Queen, the ruin of Mistress Fitton, and the relations of *two* persons to that lady :

Parti beard was afeard  
When they ran at the herd.  
The Raine dear was imboss'd,  
The white doe she was lost ;  
Pembroke strook her down  
And took her from the clown.  
Lord, for thy pity !

The White Doe is really a very happy descriptive name for Mistress Fitton, as any one may see by her portrait engraved in Lady Newdigate - Newdegate's *Gossip from a Muniment Room* ; "the clown," from whom Pembroke took her, is, of course, a player ; so that here we have external testimony, of contemporary date, to the very situation of parties in the Sonnets, Lord Pembroke being mentioned by name and the lady under a pet name exactly descriptive of her features, leaving the writer of the Sonnets to fill the place of "the clown."

Having thus obtained something like proof positive,

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I looked more closely into the Sonnets for details of the scandal, and saw that, from the 100th to the end of the series, they contained the successive stages of a strange attempt by the poet to persuade Lord Pembroke to father an impending infant which was not his. The alleged real father, who kept aloof, is darkly indicated in S. 124 as a certain courtier or statesman ; and in the upshot it appears that Shakespeare himself was impeached of the paternity, falsely as he alleges, and upon suborned information, according to the last couplet of the last sonnet addressed to Pembroke. There the story ends, so far as the Sonnets are concerned, the date in the time-scheme being the month of May 1601. They were published exactly eight years after (copyright of 20th May 1609), having been kept in the author's desk, in obedience to Horace's rule for doubtful matter, *in nonum annum*.

There were two things in the Sonnets of great moment to Shakespeare himself—the refusal of the laureateship to him, and his impeachment in the filiation case of Mistress Fitton.

After a time I was able to follow each of those personal matters into certain of the plays. The alleged false impeachment, with the hard fate of the lady herself, was the easier of the two. It is to be found in two of the plays written in the course of the next two years—‘Hamlet’ and ‘Measure for Measure.’ As any outline of this evidence would be so meagre as only to excite prejudice, I must refer direct to the three last chapters, giving here only one instance of how the facts work out. Mariana, in ‘Measure for Measure,’ is Mary Fitton, and the moated grange at St. Luke’s is an old Tudor house with a moat at Arbury, in which Mistress Fitton resided, within half a mile of her sister Lady Newdigate at the Hall, after her disgrace and banishment from the Court. I was so sure that the moated grange in the play (the scene of which is laid at Vienna) was a real English house,

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that I looked for a moated house in the topographies of that part of Warwickshire ; and when I went to see the house which seemed to be the likely one, I found it to be the old grange-house of the monastery upon whose ruins Arbury Hall was built, retaining its huge tithe barn, and its moat complete on three sides, and with an ancient square tower at one end, a survival of the time when it was a preceptory of the Knights Templars. It has the cross of the Templars cut in the stone of one of its gables, and is called Temple House to this day ; it is this association with the Temple which reappears in the "St. Luke's" of Mariana's residence.

The story of how Shakespeare came to lose the laureateship, and why his loss of it cut him so deeply, was much more difficult to disentangle than his love-affair and its sequel. In reading 'The Tempest,' I have always assumed, as I think every one does, that Prospero is Shakespeare himself. But what about Prospero's enemies ? The ulterior design of the play is to enable him to settle accounts with "all mine enemies," who are wrecked upon his island and placed in his power to that end. His enemies are five all told —three princes with one drunken butler and one jester. The five enemies are always kept carefully distinct in two classes ; the three attendant lords, as well as the young Prince Ferdinand, being excluded from the category of "enemies." The question occurred to me (I cannot find that it has ever occurred to any one else) : If Prospero be Shakespeare, who are Prospero's enemies ? It then appeared that the whole purpose of the comedy was to survey the author's life as a player and writer (in the reminiscences with Miranda and Ariel), to take farewell of the stage, to hold a final audit of his personal account, and to settle scores with every one, forgiving some cordially and others coldly and disdainfully. Just before the curtain falls, he addresses the chief princely personage, Alonso, with

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whom he has been cordially reconciled, and promises to spend the last evening on the island in relating "the story of my life."

*Alonso.*                            I long  
To hear the story of your life, which must  
Take the ear strangely.  
*Prospero.*                            I'll deliver all.

What would we not give to have heard the calm and stately Prospero relating the story of his life in the twilight of his cave on that last evening of his stay upon the enchanted island ?

*The story is in the play itself.* We have only to identify the personages and the allegory begins to unravel.

The first that I identified was the man whom Prospero always treats and speaks of with unusual affection, the "honest old counsellor" Gonzalo. There were not many English statesmen surviving in 1611 to whom those terms could be applied ; so that merely by exclusion I guessed him to be Fulke Greville. On scanning every line closely, as one should do in an enigma, I saw that the strangely studied remark about *one of Gonzalo's pockets* being stained with salt water suited the fact that one of Greville's offices was that of Treasurer of the Navy under both Elizabeth and James, Antonio's object being, with his usual cynicism, to insinuate peculation. Having thus penetrated amongst a group of English statesmen and courtiers, I went on confidently to identify the others. I forget in what order I found them out, in the course of many readings of the play and much collateral reading, but I will give them in the order of importance. The greatest surprise was Antonio, Prospero's arch-enemy and his unnatural brother. Him I found to be Lord Southampton, Shakespeare's original patron. The discovery came out as follows : Antonio engages with Sebastian in a conspiracy within the play, upon which nothing turns

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for the actual plot, being purely academic, or for the sake of characterising Antonio and Sebastian and giving animation to one of the scenes. Antonio having raised the question of the succession to the Crown, Sebastian says of Ferdinand, the heir of Naples—

I have no hope  
That he's undrown'd.  
*Antonio.*                    O, out of that "no hope"  
What great hope have you !

Halliwell-Phillipps had seen this use of "no hope," as a substantive phrase, in some MS. from which he quoted, but would give no reference to. After a search among likely sources in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum, I found it in a MS. of eight folios in Elizabethan handwriting, entitled "The Earle of Essex his rebellion, with the speache of him and of the Earle of South. upon the leads before they yealded themselves," etc. ; and on the second page of it the following report of a conversation between Sir Robert Sidney, spokesman of the besieging party in the garden of Essex House on the evening of Sunday the 8th February 1601, and Lord Southampton on the leads, spokesman for the rebels within :—

*Sydney.* By standing out there is noe hope, but by yealdinge there is some hope afforded you.

*South.* Well, cosen, that hope is soe little that without hostages wee will rather make choice of this noe hope then of that hope.

This was enough at the outset to identify Antonio with Lord Southampton, Sebastian with Essex, the plot in the play with the historical conspiracy of those two. The next discoveries were, that Antonio is carefully made to appear the evil genius of Sebastian in the conspiracy—Southampton the evil genius of Essex in the political plot which cost the latter his head ; and that Francisco, the lord in attendance upon Duke Antonio, is Francis Bacon—"this lord of weak remembrance," Bacon *immemor*, forgetful of old benefits and on

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the outlook for new, who prosecuted for the Crown at the State Trial, pressed the case against Essex, his benefactor, but did not press the case against Southampton, to whom he hastened to pay court as soon as he was released from the Tower on the accession of James. The identification of Bacon with Francisco, which turns upon two points compacted into five lines, has been made by latter-day scepticism of greater interest than Shakespeare could ever have imagined. Alonso the King of Naples becomes Lord Pembroke almost naturally ; it was with him that Prospero desired above all to be reconciled ; Ferdinand is brought in as his heir ; and Miranda, the beloved daughter of Prospero, is to be married to the heir of Naples, and the two royal houses united in a lasting alliance—Shakespeare's folio of his works to be dedicated to Lord Pembroke and his heir.

Other identifications will be found in the text. But the real enigma of Shakespeare's literary life remained : Why was Lord Southampton his enemy, his unnatural brother, his supplanter, and the cause of his allegorical exile ? It was a long time before I found out that ; and I should not be able to recapitulate all the steps if I tried. One of the first clues was the identification of Parolles in 'All's Well that Ends Well,' with a poet now almost forgotten, Barnabe Barnes, who was one of Lord Southampton's *protégés* ; his identity is not at all difficult to prove, and can be used to base upon with the utmost confidence. Next I found that Count Bertram in the same comedy had a curious likeness to Southampton in the affair of his marriage with Mistress Vernon (Helena), while it was obvious that Bertram was under the evil influence of Parolles. I was able to trace the hand of Barnes in the well-known tragedy of *Locrine*, which bears upon its title-page of 1595 that it was "set forth, overseen, and corrected, by W. S."—that is to say, by Shakespeare. This pointed to some kind of collaboration of the

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latter with what I may call the Southampton House coterie; and that suggested the possibility of collaboration with Lord Southampton himself. There was a group of plays, of the years 1594-97, in which Shakespeare must have had help, as the sources were not all accessible to him, namely, 'The Merchant of Venice,' 'The Comedy of Errors,' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'; there was another group in which there are many traces of another hand and another taste than his, namely, 'Romeo and Juliet,' 'Richard II.,' and 'Henry V.'; there is also an anonymous play of the year 1595, 'Edward III.', in which his hand can be traced in certain scenes only. The hypothesis was that Southampton had a hand in all these, and that Barnes had also been employed in the historical plays to draft the scenes from Holinshed's *Chronicle*, and perhaps to write the routine parts. But the weakness of the theory was, that Lord Southampton was not known to have had the ambition as well as the imaginative gifts to be a poet. Here I began to investigate the anonymous poem called *Willarie his Avisa*, first published in 1594, which was as strangely popular in its day as it was peculiar in its subject and style, having enjoyed, perhaps, more editions than any poems of the time excepting Shakespeare's 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece.' It grew out of the 'Rape of Lucrece,' and was indeed a kind of playful satire upon the tragedy of the Roman matron, exhibiting the indomitable and thoroughly successful resistance of an Englishwoman named Avisa to manifold solicitations of her chastity, first as a maid and then as a wife. Not only is Shakespeare mentioned in the poetical introduction by his name as the author of 'Lucrece,' but also in a prose passage interpolated in the middle of the poem he is spoken of at some length under his initials, W. S., as the familiar friend of the author, H. W., having been called in to advise as a man of experience under the allegory of a physician treating a

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patient for an attack of the plague, "the contagion of a fantastical fit," "the unruly rage of an unbridled fancy." Between the first and the second editions of *Avisa* one finds many hints that the heroine was a real person, the barmaid of one innkeeper and the wife of another; localities also are indicated with much particularity; and, in fine, *Avisa* can be shown to have been a celebrated fair maid of the inn and afterwards hostess, whose baptismal name was Avis, and her surname Bird or Yate, and that she lived first at Merdon, near Winchester, and after her marriage at Winchester or Basingstoke; moreover, there is some evidence that the Merdon people, who were Catholics, had been in correspondence in that capacity with the household of Lord Southampton's mother in Holborn, London. The scene in Hampshire, the initials H. W. (Henry Wriothesley), the familiar friendship with W. S., the satire upon 'Lucrece,' the slightly ironical tone, the originality of the theme and the inexperience of the pen—all these things together made it morally certain to me that the author of *Willowie his Avisa* was Lord Southampton, and that he had been induced to try his hand at verse composition through his friendship with Shakespeare. Thus the antecedent objection was removed from the hypothesis of their collaboration in the writing of plays during the next four years: the patron had not only literary ambition, but also a certain poetic facility.

The parable of the unnatural brother Antonio in 'The Tempest' now began to be intelligible, with the help of the corresponding allegory in 'As You Like It' of the wrestler Orlando and his unnatural brother Oliver, who became jealous because he saw himself "misprised." During a long absence of Lord Southampton abroad in 1598, Shakespeare began to assert himself upon the title-pages of plays which had been anonymous before. In the same autumn he gave himself out boldly through the *Palladis Tamia* of

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Meres as the author of no fewer than six comedies and six tragedies or histories. This was the situation which Southampton would have found on his return in November. Whether he had any just grievance is not the question ; at all events, he saw himself “misprised” by the independent action of the man with whom he thought he had been collaborating. Just at this time, January 1599, Spenser died, and the poet-laureateship was vacant. It is clear from two of the sonnets, 67 and 68, which immediately follow the three upon Spenser’s death, that Lord Herbert was then associating with some one who wore false locks (Southampton), and that Shakespeare warned him against “infection” from his associate. At this date there could hardly have been the old intimacy between Shakespeare and his patron, who had drifted away from literary ambitions ; he had been making himself the talk and the jest of all Paris by his reckless gambling at tennis, and had incurred the lasting displeasure of Queen Elizabeth by his treatment of her maid-of-honour, Mistress Vernon, whom he came over to “justify” in August and left again immediately after the secret marriage. In the end of March 1599 he left London for the Irish campaign, and was absent until October. Meanwhile the poet-laureateship was refused to Shakespeare, having been ostensibly promised to Samuel Daniel, Lord Herbert’s old tutor. From Sonnet 94 it becomes clear that Shakespeare had discovered at length (autumn of 1599) who had been plotting against him in the matter of the laureateship, namely, the same source of “infection” to Herbert as in January—Southampton himself.

Much more was involved in the loss of the poet-laureateship than the titular honour and the pension. There were charges of plagiarism in great things and in little, Ben Jonson having compared his works to a “frippery” or old-clothes shop of wit, in his epigram of the

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year 1601, entitled “Poet Ape.” Lord Southampton’s ground of umbrage was thus only a part of a more general complaint ; so that this charge of conveying the plots and ideas of others, and of giving out as his work what was not all his, appears to have been the real reason, characteristically English, why the most original genius in our literature was deprived of the Laurel Crown. There are many small indications not only in his writings, but also some from external sources, that he felt both his exclusion and the grounds of his exclusion acutely ; it is this that Prospero has in his memory when he forgives his enemies :

Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick,  
Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury  
Do I take part.

In one of the greatest, perhaps the most elaborate, of his comedies, ‘*Troilus and Cressida*,’ we see him in an intermediate period, 1602-03, as Achilles in his tent, the Greeks being the poets of the day and the Trojans the nobles or men of affairs. The identities of most of the characters are discoverable by numerous subtle touches, and by some quite broad hints. Achilles lolls on his bed, responding with deep-chested laughter to the mimicking of the other Greek chiefs by Patroclus (John Fletcher). This comedy was claimed in the original preface as the wittiest work of its author ; and so indeed it ought to be accounted when it is read with a key. The spleen and wounded vanity of Achilles are nothing less than amazing as deliberate introspection and self-analysis. He is intimate and cordial with Chapman (Ulysses), respectful and polite to Daniel (Agamemnon), affectionate to old Churchyard (Nestor), and merciless only to Ben Jonson (Ajax) and Marston (Thersites), who are the same couple as Stephano the drunken butler and Trinculo the jester in ‘*The Tempest*.’

**BOOK I**  
**SHAKESPEARE'S STORY IN THE SONNETS**



## CHAPTER I

### THE KEY TO THE SONNETS

SHAKESPEARE prepared his Sonnets for the press and had them published in 1609, probably among the last things he did before he left London. It may be assumed that he had some hesitation about printing them at all, for it was not until he had fulfilled Horace's conditions for doubtful literary matter, namely, to keep it in your desk *in nonum annum*, until the ninth year, that he sent them to the press, the copyright having been taken out on 20th May 1609, just into the ninth year from the date of the events in the last sonnets. If he had any belief in their promise of an eternity of fame to himself (S. 107) and to the principal person addressed in them (S. 81), he must have looked on the book as testamentary. But he must have known that he was throwing an enigma to the world, to make what it could of ; and therefore he went as far as he thought fit in supplying a key, the printed text giving here and there (as the sequel will show) such clues as typography can give to the identity of persons. He might indeed have been more explicit, for example, by writing headings to the several sonnets, as some of his contemporaries did ; but he was naturally chary of revealing more than circumstances warranted at the time. At the end of the volume he printed a remarkable poem, 'A Lover's Complaint,' which, if also enigmatic, seems to be meant somehow to help out the story of the Sonnets ("their distract parcels in

## KEY TO THE SONNETS

combined sums"); and in it he has left a valuable hint of what his method was in the enigma—he gives us his view of the capabilities and uses of the sonnet as a lyrical form. It is the more necessary to recall this hint, inasmuch as Wordsworth has missed it in his categories of sonnet-writers ("Scorn not the sonnet," etc.). His first example is, "With this key Shakespeare unlocked his heart"; but some have doubted the fact, Browning among them. It would have been more correct to have added, "and with the same key he locked up his meaning." His own view of the sonnet is hardly expressed by any of Wordsworth's examples; it is called "deep-brained," and is likened to the diamond, the emerald, the sapphire, or the opal—

Each several stone,  
With wit well blazon'd, smiled or made some moan.

There are only a few of the whole one hundred and fifty-four sonnets so vehement and impassioned as to have no place for wit; in some even of the gravest kind, and in all the rest, there is wit everywhere. One is apt to think that Milton's characteristics of "L'Allegro" and of "Il Penseroso," if they were ever being mixed, would best express the spirit and method of the Sonnets—the "quips and cranks and wanton wiles" of the cheerful man, with the "sage and solemn tunes" of the pensive man, "where more is meant than meets the ear." It is noteworthy that Milton uses in "Il Penseroso" a striking figure, "forget thyself to marble," which he had used before in his Epitaph on Shakespeare: surely he was thinking of the Sonnets of 1609 quite as much as of the Folio of 1623:

For whilst to th' shame of slow-endeavoring art  
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart  
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book  
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,  
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,  
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving.

## THEIR DEDICATION

It is a long way from that to certain modern views, which see in the Sonnets either "frigid conceits" or such veiled personal meanings as the author never meant to be given to the world.

The most damnable of all the recent heresies is, that the Sonnets were abstracted from the author's desk, and published without his leave by a low bookseller, who at the same time annexed the 'Lover's Complaint,'— "with characteristic insolence," as one authority says. The single ground of this queer hypothesis is, that the dedication of the volume is made by the publisher and not by the author—as if the author had not an obvious and imperative reason for putting forward the convenient publisher to dedicate the book to its "only begetter" (the phrase covering a sly joke, see p. 68), wishing him all happiness now that years had passed and bygones were bygones, the reason, namely, that, on the book's own showing, they had met last in a deadly quarrel, and had parted with the *envoi* of S. 125 flung at his false friend's head by the angry playwright :

Hence, thou suborn'd *Informer!* a true soul,  
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control.

How can any one maintain that the quarto of 1609 had not been prepared for the press by the author himself? The longer sequence of one hundred and twenty-six sonnets is, at all events, a natural order, which hardly admits of rearrangement, and must have been designed. Mr. Wyndham finds evidence also of the author's care for his copy, as one piece, if not for the proof-sheets of the book, in the high degree of uniformity with which italics (with capitals) are used for certain words to the number of thirty-six, as well as in the methodical use of capitals for a much larger group of common nouns (some two hundred) which he classifies under five heads. It is, of course, arguable that the copy had been found by the supposed thief in a condition all ready for the press; and it may be

## KEY TO THE SONNETS

urged that the printed text shows so many errors and so much careless pointing that the author could hardly have taken pains to correct the proofs, and possibly may not have seen them. But the state of the text, which, as Boaden said, is “neither careless nor inelegant,” is not that of a book printed without the author’s knowledge. Any one who is curious to see the difference between a posthumous edition and an author’s edition of a work of that age may compare the 4th edition of Davison’s *Poetical Rapsodie*, 1621, with one of the three editions printed in his lifetime. Supposing the copy to have been stolen, and printed without his knowledge, he could have stopped it, as he probably stopped some of the sonnets which were circulating among his friends long before: a book made up of *Amores* by J. D. (Sir John Davies) “with certeine othyr sonnetes by W. S.” was entered on the Stationers’ Register, 3rd January 1600, by Eleazer Edgar, but is not heard of again.

The words printed in italics with initial capitals will strike every one who uses the original text. There is one in the second line of the opening sonnet—namely, *Rose*: it is the keynote. There is another, *Hews*, in S. 20, which is obviously a play between a proper name and the common noun “hew,” or “hue.” In Sonnets 135 and 136 there are ten printings of *Will*, to pun with the word for volition or desire (“for my name is *Will*”), and one more in S. 143. Besides these thirteen, there are twenty-three more, which Mr. Wyndham accounts for severally (all but the *Informer* of S. 125) as “either a proper name or else of Greek or Latin extraction.” But that is hardly the correct principle. All the names from classical mythology, along with *Eve* from Biblical, are printed uniformly in italics, to the number of eleven, and with these the adjective *Grecian* is included by a slip. The vigilance with which these scattered names had been underlined is in marked contrast to the carelessness of Thomas Watson’s

## THE WORDS IN ITALICS

*Tears of Fancy*, a posthumous volume of sonnets (1593), in which nineteen of the names from Ovid are in italics and fourteen of them in roman (in a copy which wants Sonnets 9-16).

Next we come to a group of words, not only of Latin or Greek “extraction,” as Mr. Wyndham says (which would be a wide class), but pure Latin or Greek or Arabic—*Quietus*, *Interim*, *Audit* (twice), *Statue* (elsewhere *statua*), *Abism*, and *Alcumie*—every instance of the kind is in italics except one “audit” and one “alcumie.” In the ‘Lover’s Complaint’ the close observance of the rule is almost startling. There is only one word in italics in the whole forty-seven stanzas—namely, *Alloes*, bitter aloes, in stanza 39, being a pure Greek word of three syllables like *statua* in Latin; and that is the only word in all the poem (excepting one “audit”) that calls for italics, according to the typographical rules deduced from the Sonnets.

There remain only four of the italicised words to deal with, besides *Rose*, *Hews*, and the eleven *Wills*—namely, *Informer*, *Autumne*, *Heriticke*, and *Alien* in the “alien pen” of the rival poet of S. 78. It may be said that “alien” is Law Latin like “audit,” and should be in the same group; but it was much too old a synonym for “stranger” to be still treated as a pure Latin word, having been in Wyclif’s Bible both as an adjective and a substantive; besides, there is no propriety in using it in “alien pen” for its literal meaning: it is italicised just because it is used for some other purpose. So also the italics in “thou suborn’d *Informer*” are a special underlining, the sting of which would have been felt by the person to whom the sonnet was written. *Autumne* in S. 104, in the context of six other seasons or months not in italics, is thus emphasised because it is “childing Autumn,” or the season of fruitfulness. *Heriticke* occurs in the remarkable phrase of S. 124, “policy, that Heretic” (compare ‘Twelfth Night,’ III. ii. 33), which has a sufficient meaning in the original Greek sense of

## KEY TO THE SONNETS

“policy, that free-to-choose” ; but it is underlined also to point to an individual who was a heretic, as Ben Jonson defines the term : *Puritanus Hypocritica est Haereticus* ; therefore the italics, to distinguish its use here from its ordinary ecclesiastical use elsewhere (eight times in the Plays). After these, we are left with *Rose*, *Hews*, *Alien*, and the *Wills* ; and these contain the key or keys to the enigma of the real personages and events of the Sonnets.

Tyrwhitt's explanation of the line in S. 20—

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted. . . .  
A man in hew, all *Hews* in his controlling

—was that *Hews* (*Hughes*) was some one's surname ; but he had not attempted to construe “Controlling all *Hews* (or *Hughes*) in his own hew”—i.e. in his own mien or aspect. *Hews* is not a surname singular, with a possessive ending, but the plural of a proper name, as the “all *Hews*” requires it to be. It is a play upon one of the baronies or courtesy titles of the Earl of Pembroke, Fitzhugh, or Fitzhew ; so that the line construes : “A man in hew, [my lord Fitzhew], the lord of all the sons of Hew.” In like manner, in the opening couplet of S. 1—

From fairest creatures we desire increase,  
That thereby beauty's *Rose* might never die

—*Rose* is my lord Rose, my lord Ros of Kendal, another of the Pembroke baronies. The only real barony of the earldom of Pembroke at that time was Herbert of Cardiff, which was young Herbert's proper courtesy title ; but his father, the second earl, who was much engrossed with genealogy and heraldry, had annexed, on the death without issue of his maternal uncle Lord Parr in 1571, a whole garland of ancient or semi-legendary baronies, two of which—Marmion and St. Quentin—were, according to Dugdale, never alive at all as baronies of the realm, while the other three or

## MY LORD ROSE

four were probably defunct — namely, the primary barony of Parr and its pendants Fitzhew, Ros of Kendal, and Hart (in Northamptonshire), the last having been a new creation by patent of Henry VIII. to the last Lord Parr. All of these, excepting Hart, continued to be given as Pembroke baronies as late as the 1812 edition of Collins's *Peerage*, and it is clear that they were in actual use in Shakespeare's time, from a sonnet of Francis Davison (1602) addressed to William, Earl of Pembroke, Lord Herbert of Cardiff, Marmion, and St. Quintin.

Shakespeare's favourite among these courtesy titles appears to have been my lord Ros, which made a good pet name as my lord Rose. The imagery of the Rose (always with a capital), including its colours, perfumes, distilled essence, thorns, and canker, recurs in sonnet after sonnet, and may run through all the fourteen lines, as in S. 54 and S. 95. In the latter there is a line which is conclusive proof that he knew W. H. by the name of Rose :

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame,  
Which, like a canker in the fragrant Rose,  
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name !  
Oh in what sweets dost thou thy sins inclose !  
That tongue that tells the story of thy days,  
(Making lascivious comments on thy sport)  
Cannot dispraise but in a kind of praise :  
Naming thy name blesses an ill report.  
Oh what a mansion have those vices got,  
Which for their habitation chose out thee,  
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot,  
And all things turns to fair that eyes can see !

What other name than Rose can be said, in the naming of it, to bless an ill report ? As Bishop Hall says : " Anything passes well under the rose." The sonnet might have been headed either *Sub Rosa* or *Couleur de Rose*. Again, as late as S. 109, we find Rose in the last couplet, although nothing in the sonnet leads up to it as a figure of speech :

## KEY TO THE SONNETS

For nothing this wide universe I call,  
Save thou, my Rose ; in it thou art my all.

It is the old pet name escaping from him, the same name as in S. 89 :

and in my tongue  
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell.

That the sweet name was Rose is the more probable from the parallel case of Rosaline in ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’:

When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her name,  
And Rosaline they call her.

The other Pembroke baronies were not so well suited to allegorial or paronomastic uses ; the single attempt with Fitzhew, “all Hews in his controlling,” is ingenious but not neat. It is not easy to pun upon Parr, while Marmion and St. Quentin are best left alone. But one can imagine Hart (Heart) being treated like Ros ; and it is not impossible that occasional puns upon it are intended, although the pair of antithetic sonnets, 46 and 47, upon the heart and the eye, are best explained as a parody of Watson’s jingling pair, 19 and 20 of the *Tears of Fancy*. It is probable that the garland of semi-legendary or defunct Pembroke baronies, and the numerous ancestry involved in them, are wittily pointed at in the mysterious Sonnet 31, which would be headed, “Dead Baronies alive again” (“love” being used, as in some other places, in the figurative sense of “generation”):

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts  
Which I by lacking have supposed dead ;  
And there reigns Love and all Love’s loving parts,  
And all those friends which I thought buried.  
How many a holy and obsequious tear  
Hath dear religious love stol’n from mine eyes  
As interest of the dead, which now appear  
But things remov’d that hidden in thee lie.

## PEMBROKE HERALDRY

Thou art the grave where buried love doth live,  
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,  
Who all their parts of me to thee did give,  
That due of many now is thine alone.  
Their images I lov'd I view in thee  
And thou (all they) hast all the all of me.

Besides the genealogy, the heraldry of the Pembroke family comes also into two sonnets. The mock-sublime imagery of the apostrophe to Time in S. 19, a lion with retracted claws, a tiger with toothless "yaws," and a phoenix, are very nearly the supporters and crest of the Pembroke arms, the panther supporter being changed into a tiger, and the wyvern of the crest into the more familiar and equally fabulous phoenix :

Devouring Time, blunt thou the Lion's paws,  
And make the Earth devour her own sweet brood,  
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce Tiger's yaws,  
And burn the long-lived Phœnix in her blood.

To explain the second line one must go to heraldry. The lion the brood of the earth is the heraldic lion *issuant*, as Milton also conceives him in his primal creation, *Paradise Lost*, vii. 463 ; the sweet brood of the earth being devoured by its mother would be the lion in the opposite heraldic situation, whatever it may be called in heraldry.

The second instance is S. 105, which might be headed with the Pembroke motto—*Ung je servirai* :

Let not my love be called Idolatry,  
Nor my beloved as an Idol show,  
Since all alike my songs and praises be  
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.  
Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind,  
Still constant in a wondrous excellence ;  
Therefore my verse to constancy confin'd,  
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.

The "Idolatry" and "Idol" of the opening lines point clearly to a portrait (as in 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,'

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IV. ii. 129) which would have had the family motto painted on it. One of the engraved portraits of Lord Pembroke has *Ung je serviray* in large letters round the border. In the second half of the sonnet, the play of ideas is upon the Parr motto, *Amour avec loyauté*:

Fair, kind, and true is all my argument,  
—Fair, kind, and true *varying to other words*—  
And in this change is my invention spent :  
Three themes in one which wondrous scope affords.  
Fair, kind, and true have often lived alone,  
Which three till now never kept seat in one.

The date of this corresponds with Lord Herbert's accession to the Earldom of Pembroke.

The identity of the person addressed, in the first series of sonnets, with Lord Pembroke being thus determined beyond reasonable doubt, according to the original guess of Mr. Heywood Bright of Lincoln's Inn (1818), on grounds which his fastidiousness in completing his proof kept him from ever publishing, and according to the evidence of Mr. Boaden in 1832, which Hallam and many others have held to be sufficient for practical assent although it was not a "strict" proof, it becomes easy to fix the dates of the several events which inspired certain groups of the Sonnets. The opening series—1-17—addressed to a youth unwilling to marry, are explained by the unsuccessful project of marriage, in 1597, between Lord Herbert, aged seventeen, and Bridget Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford. In the spring of 1598 young Herbert commenced residence in London, and appeared at Court—

His years but young, but his experience old ;  
His head unmellow'd, but his judgement ripe

—like Proteus arriving at the Court of Milan in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona.' An intimacy with Shakespeare appears to have been struck up at once,

## DATES FIXED

the traces of which are in the latter half of the series of affectionate and admiring Sonnets 1-32. If it should seem, as it seemed to Hallam, that these and other sonnets betray an "excessive and misplaced affection," it should be kept in mind as explaining the writer's obviously sincere compliments to the young noble, "the world's fresh ornament," that Clarendon, in his faithful portrait of Lord Pembroke, declares him to have been "the most universally loved and esteemed of any man of that age." Before long ("he was but one hour mine") an unpleasantness arose between them about the lady who was the poet's mistress. This comes into eight sonnets as a very serious matter; but after S. 42 it is dropped, and does not appear again until S. 93, but for passing references to jealousy in Sonnets 57, 58, and 61, and to slander or suspicion, like a crow in the clear sky, in S. 70. The sonnets from 43 to 63 correspond with an uneventful period, during part of which the writer seems to have been on tour as an actor. S. 60 is on Christmas and the New Year. Next comes a striking sequence of three, 64-66, which suit exactly the title of one of Spenser's poems, "The Ruins of Time," and were doubtless inspired by that poet's sad death in ruined circumstances at his lodging in King Street, Westminster, on 8th January 1599. The series of ten which follow, 67-76, are notable for their despondent tone, and for one probable hint of suicide in S. 74 ("the coward conquest of a wretch's knife"). One cause of the despondency is, that Lord Herbert has come within the influence of some "infection," which I shall show afterwards (in Chapter IX.) to have been that of Lord Southampton, lately returned to London from his dissipations in Paris. If Southampton had been still Shakespeare's patron, the tone of these sonnets would be unaccountable; but, in fact, he had become his enemy, and was plotting against him. Then comes the remarkable episode of the Rival Poet in nine sonnets, 78-86, with the bitter

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feelings which it left behind, in six more sonnets. S. 77, the next before the rival-poet series begins, gives us a clue to the date. It is written to accompany the gift of a blank-book, or table-book, in which it was probably inscribed. Malone pointed out that it was the custom to make such gifts on New Year's Day; but Steevens cited the case of Lord Orrery sending Swift a pocket-book on his birthday, with just such another sonnet written in it. The theme was the lapse of time; and as it is young Herbert's natal years ("thy precious minutes") rather than calendar years that are meant, the occasion was probably his birthday. If we take it to have been his nineteenth birthday, the date of S. 77 would have been 8th April 1599. The very next sonnet opens the affair of the rival poet, which with its bitter sequel may be supposed to carry us towards the end of that year. There was then a break in the correspondence. Summer, autumn, and the next spring are named as the seasons of absence; but it is probable that the lines on Winter in S. 97 must be taken literally and not allegorically:

How like a Winter hath my absence been  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year !  
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen,  
What old December's barenness everywhere !

He goes on as if the season had not really been winter, but winter only in his feelings and thoughts :

And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,  
The teeming Autumn, big with rich increase,  
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,  
Like widow'd wombs after their Lords' decease.  
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me  
But hope of Orphans and unfathered fruit ;  
For Summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
And thou away the very birds are mute.  
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer  
That leaves look pale, dreading the Winter's near.

The meaning of all this exquisite allegory cannot be

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made clear just yet. But the conclusion from it would be that Summer and Autumn, the pretended seasons, are brought in for the sake of the ideas of pleasure and fecundity, and that the sonnet was written actually for winter, notwithstanding the words "And yet this time removed was," etc. The need for making the real date winter appears from the next sonnet, 98, which is on Spring, and cannot have followed a Summer-and-Autumn sonnet. Mr. Wyndham has found another clue to the date of the Spring sonnet, 98 :

From you have I been absent in the spring,  
When proud pied April, dressed in all his trim,  
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing :  
That heavy *Saturn* laugh and leapt with him.

He has ascertained that Saturn was in opposition on 4th April 1600, 17th April 1601, and 29th April 1602, rising as a bright planet about sunset in the first year, and at a gradually later hour in the Aprils of the two next years. Our choice is really limited to the April of 1600 by two valuable clues to the dates which are contained in the following group of sonnets, 100-126. The first of these is in S. 104, which counts the seasons that had passed since their friendship began : thrice had winter shaken the leaves from the trees, thrice had autumn turned to yellow, thrice had April perfumes burned hot in June. Starting from the spring of 1598, we should now be in the middle of the third winter, 1600-1601. The other clue confirms this, the national event of S. 107 :

Not mine own fears nor the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,  
Can yet the lease of my true love control,  
Supposed as forfeit to a confin'd doom.  
The mortal Moon hath her eclipse endur'd,  
And the sad Augurs mock their own presage ;  
Incertainties now crown themselves assur'd,  
And peace proclaims Olives of endless age.

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Now with the drops of this most balmy time  
My love looks fresh, and death to me subscribes ;  
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,  
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes.  
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,  
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

The Queen, under the figure of the mortal Moon, had endured, or emerged from, an eclipse, and the sad augurs were mocking their own presage. This was the foiled attempt of the Earl of Essex, with a large following of peers, knights, and esquires, to overthrow the Queen's rule on the 8th February 1601. There had been a notable eclipse the year before, on which Woodhouse's Almanack for 1601 based a prognostication that its influence would be felt in the State from 20th January 1601 until November. When the rebellion of Essex took place, the populace were so impressed by the closeness of Woodhouse's prophecy that the Government thought it necessary to call in the copies of the paltry book. There was no other event in Elizabeth's reign which threatened her in the same way. In the *Directions for Preachers*, issued in time for the Sunday after the attempt, it was stated : "If he had not been prevented, there had never been a rebellion in England since Richard II. more desperate and dangerous. The rebellion in the North was far off, and thereby not so perilous. The Great Armada of Spain was but a thunderclap, the noise being greater than the danger, and her Majesty's subjects faithfully united to encounter it." Shakespeare's "own fears," for his liberty "supposed as forfeit to a confined doom," are explained by the fact that some of Essex's friends went, on the Thursday or Friday before, to the Globe Theatre, and there arranged with Augustine Phillips, Shakespeare's fellow-actor and friend, to play on the Saturday "the deposing and killing of Richard II.," and promised to give the actors forty shillings as an inducement to do so, the play being "so old

## A DEFINITE DATE, 8TH FEBRUARY 1601

and so long out of use that they should have a small company at it." Essex's friends went over the water to see the play, after dining "at Gunter's"; the gossip of the day gives the impression that the play they had seen was 'Henry IV.,' whereas it was undoubtedly 'Richard II.' Phillips was examined before the law-officers of the Crown. The actors of the Globe probably had their fears, but none of them are included in the lists of those arrested.

## CHAPTER II

### THE LAUREL CROWN

IN the drama of the Sonnets, as in most dramas, the leading motive is a love-affair, which appears as early as S. 33, and leads to rapid developments and passionate scenes in the last group of sonnets. But the episode of the Rival Poet, which comes between, is also an integral part of the drama, and really more important than the other in its bearing upon Shakespeare's fortunes.

The first thing is to identify the rival poet. Having done so, we shall find that his identity throws a new light upon the real issue involved. In the nine sonnets upon the rival poet himself, 78-86, there are five clues to his identity, only one of which has been used already, by Boaden, to show that Samuel Daniel was the poet meant. It will be shown that the rivalry was really to gain Lord Herbert's interest with the Queen in filling up the office of Poet Laureate with its substantial pension, vacant on the death of Spenser.

The first clue to Daniel is in the italicised word of “*Alien* pen” in the third line of the 78th Sonnet, which opens the subject rather abruptly :

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse,  
And found such fair assistance in my verse,  
As every *Alien* pen hath got my use,  
And under thee their poesy disperse.

The meaning of “under thee” is under the Rose,

## THE RIVAL POET

*sub rosa*, privately ; this may explain the fact that no series of sonnets by Daniel to Lord Herbert are printed in his works. “Alien” is not the adjective which would have been applied to the rival’s pen for its aptness ; it would not have been an apt word unless the other poet had been a foreigner, which is out of the question. The word is chosen, and printed in italics with a capital, for the sake of an anagram. It is an anagram of Daniel all but the D. It is also an imperfect anagram (nothing unusual then, see Manningham’s *Diary*, Camden Soc., 1868, p. 18) of Alleyn or Aleyn, and it would have been a perfect anagram of the last if “alien” were in the archaic spelling “alyen.” Thomas Alleyn, well known as a necromancer, is stated by Anthony Wood to have cast Lord Herbert’s nativity, and is supposed to have enjoyed the patronage and hospitality of the Pembroke family. It appears from S. 86 that the other poet had astrological “compeers by night”; and Boaden, following up a hint originally given by Steevens, discovered him in Daniel, who had been young Herbert’s tutor at Wilton, and must there have “come within the very lime-twigs of the necromancer’s spells.” The sonnet is explicit enough :

Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write  
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead ?  
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night,  
Giving him aid, my verse astonished ;  
He, nor that affable familiar ghost  
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence.

Steevens thought that this meant Dr. John Dee. He was the greatest necromancer of his time, and was countenanced by many of the nobility as well as by the Queen, who presented him, in 1596, to the warden-ship of the college at Manchester (he had aspired to a deanery). Although Boaden did not see that this astrologer was not resident in London when the sonnet was written (as he did not work out the dates at all),

## THE LAUREL CROWN

yet he was led to associate Alleyn with the “compeers by night” because the latter had cast Herbert’s nativity; so that Daniel, Dee, and Alleyn were all pointed at. And that is the explanation of “*Alien pen*”—an anagram which Boaden did not suspect. It is Daniel without D (Dee), but with Aleyn, who would stand for the “affable familiar ghost.” There is nothing in Daniel’s writings which betrays a knowledge of the black art; nor has any profession of necromancy been found in any other contemporary poet, the few words at the end of Chapman’s preface to his *Shadow of Night* (1594), upon the strength of which he has been identified as the Rival Poet, being merely a metaphor from such technical terms in necromancy as one might know without being an adept. How could one expect it? The subject itself was under the rose, and, even if it had not been so, Daniel was much too circumspect to have proclaimed himself an adept. But there was no reason why Shakespeare should not let the black cat out of the bag—in the angry mood in which he wrote S. 86.

Another clue to Daniel is in the line of S. 85 :

And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.

Meres, whose *Paladis Tamia* of 1598 places Shakespeare in effect above all the poets of the day by naming him nine times and in every category of excellence (while Daniel is only in four), uses the same figure: “The Muses would speak with Shakespeare’s fine filed phrase if they would speak English.” This compliment must have been well known; and Shakespeare gives it a ludicrous turn in transferring it from himself to his rival, by setting all the Muses to work at the filing of his phrases, the hit at Daniel being pointed at the title of his poem *Musophilus* (1599), which is punned upon in “Muses filed,” and has for its subject the arts and sciences, or all the Muses.

## SAMUEL DANIEL

There is a third clue to Daniel in the lines of S. 82 :

The dedicated words which writers use  
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.

Daniel was singular in his use of dedications, varying them in different presentation copies, and so occasioning many of those "cancels" (also of his title-pages) which are the delight of bibliophiles. Allowing for a bold hyperbole, it might have been said that he blessed every copy by dedication. The best instances are of the folio edition of his works issued for presents in 1601 (to the public in 1602), the copy of which given by him to Sir Thomas Bodley's new library at Oxford (probably after 1606) has a special printed blessing of the book to the use of the library, while the Bridgewater House copy, now in the British Museum, has the dedication to Elizabeth. There may be other instances known ; for Dr. Grosart, Daniel's editor, has generalised the fact thus : "Examination of the successive issues (private or semi-private and published) of his Poems reveals that Samuel Daniel was wont to insert special Dedications and Addresses in gift copies of his books" (*Works*, i. 2). There appears to be another gibe of the same kind in S. 85 :

While comments of your praise, richly compiled,  
Reserve their Character with golden quill.

Daniel used *gilding* as a border to his title-pages, as in some of the copies of the *Panegyrick Congratulatorie* to James I. on his accession, and may have used it more freely in his autograph dedications.

Fourthly, there is a reference to Spenser's lines on Daniel as a sonneteer in his *Colin Clout's come Home againe* (1595) :

Yet doth his trembling Muse but lowly fly,  
As daring not too rashly mount on hight ;  
And doth her trembling plumes as yet but try  
In love's soft lays and looser thought's delight.  
Then rouse thy feathers quickly, Daniell, etc.

## THE LAUREL CROWN

Shakespeare's reference to this is in the opening Sonnet on the Rival Poet, in the lines immediately after the "*Alien pen*" :

Thine eyes that taught the dumb on high to sing,  
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,  
Have added feathers to the learned's wing,  
And given grace a double Majesty.

This is a witty and pleasant hit at the well-known fine stanzas upon Stonehenge in Daniel's *Musophilus—Stonehenge*

That on the goodly plain near Wilton stands.

The "dumb on high" are the stones of the temple, which Daniel calls a "dumb heap." He makes them "sing" in his verses ; and, while he remarks upon the helplessness of Ignorance (with a capital I) to explain them, he recites the legend that they were transported in the air from Africa to Ireland, and thence to Salisbury Plain. Lord Herbert, in teaching Daniel to sing of this theme of local interest, had "added" feathers to the learned's wing—the plumes and feathers of Spenser's original compliment.

The last clue to Daniel is in the repeated use of the ship-allegory, in two sonnets, 80 and 86. The contrast in S. 80 between the rival poet's ship "of tall building and of goodly pride" sailing over the soundless deep, and his own saucy bark of light draught among the shallows, is very nearly the same figure in which Ben Jonson is contrasted with Shakespeare in Fuller's *Worthies*. But whereas the contrast there is between the two as poets and wits differently gifted, in the Sonnets it is rather between the skill and luck of two men embarked upon the sea of patronage ; and in that respect it is easy to see why Daniel should have been figured as a tall and goodly ship, or as a ship in proud full sail. He had inserted into the text of his *Civil Wars* (1595), near the beginning, a passage about

## OCCASION OF THE RIVALRY

himself which could not have escaped notice : it is in the dedication to Lord Mountjoy :

And thou, Charles Mountjoy, born the world's delight,  
That hast receiv'd into thy quiet shore  
Me tempest-driven, fortune-tossed wight,  
Tir'd with expecting and could hope no more.

If Shakespeare meant anything by using the ship-allegory of his rival twice, the train of his ideas would have been that Daniel had thriven at the hands of patrons since the date of these pathetic lines to Lord Mountjoy, that he had made progress in the art of social navigation, and was able to take the sea with greater assurance, bearing down upon "the prize" with "the proud full sail" of experience and success :

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,  
Bound for the prize of all too precious you? . . .

On the other hand, his own modest boat was likely to prove "worthless" and to be "cast away" :

My saucy bark inferior far to his. . . .  
Or being wreck'd I am a worthless boat,  
He of tall building and of goodly pride.

These phrases from the allegory of ships show clearly enough that the rivalry was no mere jealousy for jealousy's sake, and no mere contest of wits to try who could gratify my lord most ; but that it was a contest for a real prize and for Lord Herbert's interest in the same. The *envoi* of the last sonnet of the series, which has puzzled the commentators and has led to various readings, gives the most pregnant hint of all. He mentions the things that were not the cause of his silence and discomfiture, and concludes :

I was not sick of any fear from thence ;  
But when your countenance fill'd up his line,  
Then lack'd I matter, that enfeebled mine.

Daniel's "line" was his certificate (as in marriage lines, or in the singular in 'Measure for Measure,' I. v. 56),

## THE LAUREL CROWN

which Herbert had filled up; "certificate" being the term commonly given in the State Papers to an application for an office. The office was that of Poet Laureate, to which a pension of fifty pounds a year was attached, equal to three or four hundred of our money.

There is a note among Anthony Wood's collections for his *History of the University of Oxford*, that he had been told by one Ed. Joyner that "Spenser was Poet Laureate to Queen Elizabeth: when he died Samuel Daniel succeeded him, and him Ben Jonson." It may seem remarkable that we should have to depend on such casual evidence for so important a fact of the time of Elizabeth, seeing how well authenticated are the laureateships of Tate, Rowe, Eusden, Pye, and others. However, the ever-diligent Malone has proved that Spenser was indeed Poet Laureate, with a pension of fifty pounds a year, from 1591 to his death in 1599. He cited, in his *Life of Dryden* (1800), the patent for Spenser's pension, which had been found in the Rolls House shortly before (Pat. 33 Eliz., p. 3); and he showed that the omission of the title of Poet Laureate from the document meant nothing, inasmuch as it was omitted equally from the patents of Ben Jonson and Davenant. The story was, that Lord Treasurer Cecil had objected to giving a pension for skill in rhyme, and that Spenser's pension, which the Queen pressed upon her minister, was therefore given for other good and sufficient considerations. Cecil might have overcome his scruples by the precedent of Bernard André, who is actually called the King's Poet Laureate, but is given his pension by mandate of 2 Hen. VII. "in consideration of the increase of virtue and learning accruing to many persons at Oxford and elsewhere from his teaching." It was not until Ben Jonson's second patent, from Charles I., 23rd April 1630, which also raised the salary, that the "services of his wit and pen" were mentioned, besides the conventional

## APPOINTMENT BY LETTERS PATENT

“good and acceptable services heretofore done and hereafter to be done.” It was not until Dryden’s patent, 1670, that the title was formally named with the pension. Lastly, it was then unusual for the Poet Laureate to style himself so on his title-pages. Davenant’s publisher used the fact as an advertisement in a note to the posthumous folio of his works ; but he himself either used the style of “His Majesty’s Servant” or nothing at all, and Dryden did the same after him. Southey appears to have been the first eminent wearer of the laurel to sport the title ; by Wordsworth’s time all shyness has disappeared, for in his title-pages of 1847 he is “William Wordsworth, D.C.L., Poet Laureate, etc., etc.”

Although Malone left no doubt that Spenser was made Poet Laureate, he would not admit that Daniel succeeded him, maintaining that the office was vacant from Spenser’s death on 8th January 1599 until Ben Jonson’s appointment on 1st January 1616. So far as concerns appointment by Letters Patent, I am satisfied that Malone was right. I have gone over the ground again, and find as follows : The two volumes of Patent Books (Pells) in the Record Office, for the period concerned, do not contain the enrolment of a pension to Samuel Daniel ; there is one to John Daniel (probably Samuel’s brother) of forty pounds for political services, on 19th August 1595. Also that is the only pension under the name of Daniel in Dr. Julius Cæsar’s MS. list, drawn up for King James, of pensions granted by Elizabeth and still payable. But if Samuel Daniel did not get the poet’s pension by Letters Patent, there is much evidence to bear out Anthony Wood’s statement that he succeeded in a manner to the office of Poet Laureate on Spenser’s death, his honorarium coming indirectly from some benefice in the Queen’s gift.

It is, however, more important to show that there was a competition among the poets for the vacant place. This is proved by a poem of Francis Davison,

## THE LAUREL CROWN

in his *Poetical Rapsodie* of 1602, a miscellany of verses by himself and others written at various times. He addresses a copy of verses to "Samuel Daniel, Prince of English Poets," which is so like in method to the prose enumeration by Meres of Shakespeare's various excellencies in 1598 that Davison may be supposed to be giving Daniel a metrical testimonial for the vacant office, with his rival's praises in view. He shows that Daniel had produced three kinds of verse—lyrical in his *Sonnets to Delia*, tragical in his *Rosamond* and *Cleopatra*, and heroical in his *Civil Wars*. Some excelled in one kind, some in another, some in a third—

But thou alone art matchless in them all.

Next he compares him to Alexander coming after Philip: as the former grieved lest his predecessor had left him no conquests to make, so Daniel was afraid that Spenser had appropriated all the laurel—

Lest laurel were not left enough to frame  
A nest sufficient for thine endless name.

But as that pearl of Greece soon after pass'd  
In wondrous conquests his renowned sire,  
And others all whose names by Fame are plac'd  
In highest seats: so hath thy Muse surpass'd  
Spenser, and all that do with hot desire  
To the thunder-scorning laurel crown aspire.

Davison adds at the end of his testimonial the familiar tag, *Non equidem in video, miror magis*—as much as to say, "I am not in for it myself."

The competition among the poets for the laurel crown and pension may be supposed to have lasted through the summer of 1599. The eligible candidates, besides Daniel and Shakespeare, would have been Drayton, Chapman, and Ben Jonson.<sup>1</sup> It appears

<sup>1</sup> Court favour might have included others, such as Sir John Davies, the author of *Nosce Te ipsum* (1599), dedicated to the Queen (at the instance of Lord Mountjoy), who is said to have relished it so well "that she encouraged

## DANIEL THE QUASI-LAUREATE

from the 87th Sonnet that Shakespeare trusted most to the interest of Lord Herbert, who had access to the Queen, and was influential beyond his years, as shown by his father's letter of thanks to the Queen for her favour to his son (State Papers, 19th September 1599).

Daniel, however, had been tutor at Wilton, and had been encouraged to make his first essays in verse by his pupil's mother, herself a versifier and the sister of Sir Philip Sidney ; so that the desertion of his cause, which Shakespeare blamed Lord Herbert for, had at least an ostensible excuse. While there can be no doubt that the laureateship was actually in competition, several aspiring to it, as Davison said, "with hot desire," it does not follow that any one got it. Yet there is sufficient evidence in Daniel's own works that he became, as he supposed, the Laureate in 1599, and that he was in receipt of the Queen's bounty, in one form or another, before 1601. The best evidence is that he thanked the Queen, in a dedication of his folio of 1601, for some substantial favour which had placed him in ease and comfort :

I who, by that most blessed hand sustain'd,  
In quietness do eat the bread of rest,  
And by that all-reviving power obtain'd  
That comfort which my Muse and me hath blest.

The obvious meaning of these lines has been missed hitherto, owing to the mistake of Daniel's recent editor in taking "Her Sacred Majestie" to have been Anne, queen-consort of James I. (who made Daniel one of the grooms of her chamber previous to 1607), although the date is 1601, her Majesty the hereditary reigning

him in his studies, promising him preferment, and had him sworn her servant in ordinary." The title of "servant in ordinary" was as near as any poet attained to the laureateship during the interregnum. Davies was in alliance with Ben Jonson, who is said to have helped him with the verses for the lottery at the Chancellor's in 1601, afterwards published with the initials of Davies in the 2nd edition of the *Poetical Rhapsodie*, 1608.

## THE LAUREL CROWN

sovereign, and her name given as Eliza. The quietness and comfort in which he was eating the bread of rest in 1601 correspond exactly with the picture of him in his house and garden "in Old Street, nigh London," where he "would be obscure for two months together," as Fuller says. His easy circumstances have been referred to his Court employment under James I. and the Queen; but we have his own word for it that they began under Elizabeth, and the best explanation of "that comfort which my Muse and me hath blest" is some benefice in lieu of the poet's pension. There is, indeed, evidence in a letter of 8th April 1595, from Fulke Greville to Sir R. Cecil, that the Queen had promised Daniel so many years in reversion of the parsonage of Shawflete in the Isle of Wight, which up to that time he had not got: "Sir, you shall do a good deed to help the poor man; many will thank you." But it was Lord Mountjoy who came to his rescue in 1595 as a private patron; and it is significant that, in dedicating his quarto of 1599 to that nobleman, he speaks of his help in the past tense as if he had become independent of him, hoping to repay his patron's former kindness by conferring fame on him—"I that lived by thee would have thee live with me."

One more piece of evidence should settle the question whether Daniel thought himself the Laureate or not. It is derived from the symbolism and blazonry of his title-pages in the years 1599, 1601, and 1603. The 1599 quarto of his works is a composite volume of five poems, which had all been printed off with separate sheet-marks, and four with separate engraved title-pages. The three first of these are either the old plainly-engraved title of 1595 or modifications of it; but the last in the volume, and presumably the latest executed, being a new title to *Cleopatra*, is an altogether original design, which should mean either that the author was now Poet Laureate or that he was expecting his patent for the office. At the left upper

## SHAKESPEARE'S DISAPPOINTMENT

corner of the border is a female figure with a quill-pen in her right hand, and a laurel crown held aloft in her left hand. The corresponding figure on the right is blowing the trumpet of fame. At the foot of the border, on either side, are the supporters of Elizabeth's arms, the lion and dragon. The cross-piece of the border over the title is ornamented with a pair of laurel sprigs, which are overhung by a pair of broad oak-leaves. The folio of 1601 has the full royal arms of Elizabeth both on the title-page and at the head of the page of dedication. The *Panegyricke Congratulatorie*, which was delivered to James I. at Burleigh Harrington, Rutlandshire, in his progress to London in the spring of 1603, also bears the Elizabethan royal arms : the poem itself, some sixty stanzas long, is just such as the Poet Laureate would have hastened to compose for the occasion.

Those appear to have been the actual circumstances of the affair of the Laurel Crown, so far as Shakespeare himself knew them at the moment. What transpired afterwards put an altogether different face upon it than the mere rivalry of Daniel ; it appeared that that excellent poet and inoffensive man was only a stopgap : Shakespeare was refused the laurel, but no one else got it while he lived. The real meaning and motive of his exclusion will appear after his relations with Lord Southampton have been brought to light in subsequent chapters. As soon as he was informed, in a half-official and wholly friendly way, by Fulke Greville, at the instance of the Queen (as I conjecture for a reason given later), that he was not to get the patent for the office and pension, he wrote to Lord Herbert the 87th Sonnet, which is as witty as all the rest and more caustic than most :

Farewell ! thou art too dear for my possessing,  
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate.  
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing,  
My bonds in thee are all determinate.

## THE LAUREL CROWN

For how do I hold thee but by thy granting ?  
And for that riches where is my deserving ?  
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting ;  
And so my patent back again is swerving.  
Thyself thou gav'st thy own worth then not knowing,  
Or me to whom thou gav'st it else mistaking.  
So thy great gift upon misprision growing  
Comes home again, on better judgement making.  
Thus have I had thee as a dream doth flatter,  
In sleep a King, but waking no such matter.

The meaning of all this is so obvious in the context in which I have placed it, that it does not seem necessary to add one word of comment. And yet this sonnet has been always there, the next in order after the series of nine upon the Rival Poet, without any one seeing what his expected patent meant, or what kind of king he was in his dreams. He aspired to be Poet Laureate, and he was sore at his failure. The degree in which he felt his disappointment comes out also in the impassioned 90th Sonnet, although it was only a “petty grief” in comparison with the loss of Lord Herbert’s friendship, which seemed imminent from another cause :

Then hate me when thou wilt ; if ever, now ;  
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,  
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,  
And do not drop in for an after loss.  
Ah, do not, when my heart hath 'scapt this sorrow,  
Come in the rearward of a conquered woe ;  
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,  
To linger out a purposed overthrow.  
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,  
When other petty griefs have done their spite,  
But in the onset come ; so shall I taste  
At first the very worst of fortune's might.  
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,  
Compared with loss of thee, will not seem so.

## CHAPTER III

### MISTRESS FITTON

THE identity of the Dark Lady of the Sonnets with Mary Fitton, a maid-of-honour to Queen Elizabeth from 1596 to 1601, was alleged first by Mr. Thomas Tyler in 1884, on the ground that she could be shown, by letters and other documents of the time, to be the person with whom Lord Pembroke was involved in a scandal. In 1897 Lady Newdigate-Newdegate printed with a commentary, under the title of *Gossip from a Muniment Room*, a number of letters addressed to Mary Fitton's elder sister Anne, Lady Newdigate, including one from the maid-of-honour herself (which is notable only for a tendency to run into iambic verse). This correspondence proved interesting for the present subject chiefly as showing that Mary Fitton had another lover, Sir William Knollys, Comptroller of the Household. Hitherto there has been nothing to connect Shakespeare with this lady, except the internal evidence from his Sonnets that his mistress and Lord Pembroke's was one and the same. The internal evidence, which will appear in due course, ought to suffice; but I am now able to supplement it by a new proof of the fact from outside, which shall be given at once.

The scandal in which Lord Pembroke's name was joined with Mistress Fitton's became known early in 1601, when the lady's condition became apparent. It is thus referred to in a letter of 26th January from Sir John Stanhope to Sir George Carew, the President of

## MISTRESS FITTON

Munster : “Of the persecution which is likely to befall the poor maids’ chamber in Court, and of Fitton’s afflictions, and lastly her commitment to my Lady Hawkyns, and the discouragement thereby of the rest, though it be now out of your element to think of, yet I doubt not but that some friend doth more particularly advertise you.” This is the fluttering of the dovecot that comes into an unprinted ballad of the year 1601, preserved among the State Papers (Eliz., vol. 278, No. 23), in which the Maids’ Chamber, or the Queen’s Household in general, represented as a herd of deer, is the subject of the second stanza (the Lord Chamberlain being the subject of the first, Sir Robert Cecil of the third, and Raleigh of the seventh and last) :

### I

Chamberlin, Chamberlin,  
He’s of her Grace’s kin.  
Fool hath he ever bin,  
With his puny silver pin,  
Fair without, foul within.  
She makes his coxcomb thin  
And quake in every limb.  
Quicksilver’s in his head  
But his wit’s dull as lead.  
Lord, for thy pity !

### II

Parti beard was afeard  
When they ran at the herd ;  
The Raine dear was imbold,  
The white doe she was lost ;  
Pembroke strook her down  
And took her from the clown.  
Lord, for thy pity !

### III

Little Cecil creeps up and down,  
He rules Bet, court, and crown,  
With his brother Burlie clown  
In his great fox-furr’d gown.  
With the long proclamation  
He swore he sav’d the town.  
Is it not likely ?

## “TOOK HER FROM THE CLOWN”

### VII

Rawleigh doth true bestride,  
He sits 'twixt wind and tide ;  
Yet uphill he cannot ride  
For all his bloody pride.  
He seeks taxes in the tin,  
He pollis the poor to the skin ;  
Yet he swears it is no sin.  
Lord, for thy pity !

“Parti beard” seems to be a nickname of the Comptroller of the Household, Sir William Knollys; the “Raine dear” is the Queen (*la reine*); “imbost” or embossed is a hunting term with the secondary meaning of enraged (as in ‘Antony and Cleopatra,’ IV. xiii. 3); the “white doe” is Mistress Fitton; and the “clown” from whom Pembroke took her is of course a player, *Pembroke*, and who but Shakespeare?<sup>1</sup> The reference in the stanza upon Cecil to the “long proclamation” with which “he swore he saved the town,” dates the ballad after the 9th of February 1601, the proclamation being that which followed the rebellion of the Earl of Essex on the 8th of February. The author of the ballad may be guessed to be the old poet Thomas Churchyard, on the following grounds: It is written in the doggerel manner of Skelton, for whom Churchyard professed a great admiration (he is buried next to him in St. Margaret’s, Westminster), having himself begun to write in Edward VI.’s reign, when Skelton’s vogue was greatest. Secondly, it has Churchyard’s known eccentricities of spelling: for example, in the first stanza puny is “ponne”; in the second, afeard is “afurd,” while herd is “heard”; and in the stanza upon Raleigh “polls” the poor is “pawles,” which is nearly the same as in one of his printed poems, “the

<sup>1</sup> The allegory of the herd of deer may have been chosen in order to point at the lines in ‘Titus Andronicus,’ which was published the year before (II. i. 93):

What, hast thou not full often struck a doe,  
And borne her cleanly by the keeper’s nose?

## MISTRESS FITTON

poure to powll," and to "powll and shave." Lastly, Churchyard lived at the Court end of the town, a gentleman by birth and associations, subsisting in his old age on the bounty of Dr. Julius Cæsar, Master of the Requests and legal adviser attendant on the Queen's person, so that he was in all respects a likely person to pick up Court scandal and put it into Skeltonical verse.

Besides the evidence of the Sonnets themselves, there is also internal evidence from 'Love's Labour's Lost' that Shakespeare was acquainted with the Dark Lady before he knew Herbert, and from 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' that he used their first quarrel about her, in 1598, as a motive in that comedy. First as to these plays.

'Love's Labour's Lost,' with the text as we now have it, was published in 1598, "As it was presented before her Highnes this last Christmas. Newly corrected and augmented by W. Shakspere." The Princess of France, with three ladies in waiting, is sent by her ailing father on a mission to the King of Navarre, who is in retirement in the country with three of his lords, having taken vows to study and to avoid the society of women. The king and his three courtiers are in this fix, that they owe hospitality to their fair visitors, but their vows forbid :

*King.* Hear me, dear lady : I have sworn an oath.  
*Prin.* Our Lady help my lord ! he'll be forsworn.  
*King.* Not for the world, fair madam, by my will.  
*Prin.* Why, will shall break it, will and nothing else.

On this Mr. Grant White comments, that it is quite probable that Shakespeare himself played the king in the performance at Court (it is known that he was often employed there), and that there is a pun upon his name in the above dialogue, just as in Sonnets 135 and 136: the conversation and reply are too forced, he thinks, not to have that object. But the person who is really set to break down the vow by his casuistry,

## AS ROSALINE

or to provide “some salve for perjury,” is not the king, but the Lord Biron (Berowne), by his great speech at the end of Act IV. The part of Biron is made for Shakespeare in several respects, including the important one of age (“an older Noble of Navar, the lover of Rosalin”). He is so much Shakespeare himself all through the play that Brandes, in his recent work, calls him Biron-Shakespeare. Now Rosaline, to whom he played Biron, is the same in features and character as the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. Biron soliloquises, III. i. 197 :

And among three to love the worst of all,  
A whitly wanton with a velvet brow,  
With two pitch balls stuck in her face for eyes ;  
Ay—and, by heaven, one that will do the deed  
Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard.  
And I to sigh for her, to watch for her,  
To pray for her : Go to, it is a plague  
That Cupid will impose for my neglect  
Of his almighty dreadful little wight. *a.m.*  
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue, groan :  
Some men must love my lady, and some Joan.

There are indications in the margin of the play (1598) that it had been written for a small private stage. One ought not to say adapted, although the experts are resolved that it must have existed in an earlier form years before Christmas 1597,—because it has so many rhyming verses ! As if it were not as natural for ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ to have rhyming lines as it is for farce or burlesque at any time ! As it was written for the Court, it is probable that the female parts, unless perhaps that of the country wench, were played by lady amateurs, and that at least two of the King of Navarre’s courtiers were played by young men of Elizabeth’s Court—Dumaine by Lord Southampton, and Long-a-will, “a tall young noble of Navar” (with an obviously intended change of spelling from Longueville), by some tall young courtier whose familiar name was “Will.” The ladies have masks,

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not only in the scene which turns upon an exchange of masks, but also on their first appearance (Act II. Sc. i. 124). The ladies of Elizabeth's Court are known to have acted in masques or allegories, which were primarily designed for the splendid dresses and the dances, but were not without declamation or even dialogue ; there was a famous one of the kind at the Russell marriage at Blackfriars, in June 1600, in which Mary Fitton took the lead (she was devoted to the stage). The objection to women on the stage applied only to the public theatres, and even for these it did not obtain in Italy at that time.

Mistress Mary Fitton is so like the Lady Rosaline of the Christmas comedy of 1597, that it looks as if the part had been written for her. The chief discrepancy, both in that play and in the Sonnets, is that in her authentic portraits her eyes are painted as dark blue-grey and her hair as dark brown. Mr. Tyler, however, has satisfied himself that her hair is black in her painted marble effigy in Gawsworth Church ; the shade of brown in the hair of the portrait may have been a liberty taken by the artist. It is not necessary to take Shakespeare's references to her dark eyes to mean the iris as black as the pupil, which is an unusual blackness of the eye. The "two pitch balls stuck in her face" is an obvious hyperbole ; while in the Sonnets he seems to be reserving something : for he says in one, "her eyes so suited" to her raven brows that "they mourners seem," and in another, that they have "put on black, and loving mourners be." In the later of her two portraits, taken probably about 1600, when she was at the height of her favour with the Queen, she is in full Court dress—a high-bred, slender figure above medium height, with white hands and long taper fingers, a grey-white complexion, handsome eyes, a small mouth, full lips, a retreating chin, and somewhat demure expression. The striking features, both of her and her sister, are the

## THE WHITE DOE

great sloping forehead, with the mass of dark hair drawn back and surmounted by a tire, and the somewhat long nose in line with the brow, making a bird-like profile. Her brows are Rosaline's commanding feature: "Who dares look upon the heaven of her brow that is not blinded by her majesty?" Again, he seems to have the same brows, consequently the very person, in mind where Falstaff tells Mrs. Ford, playing the part with a plain kerchief over the brows, that he wishes he could make her my lady: "Thou hast the right arched bent of the brow, that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance." The "white doe" of the ballad is really a very apt description of the lady's features, according to the portrait of her at Arbury, and was probably one of her pet names. Shakespeare's "whitly wanton with a velvet brow" is just the "white doe." A white doe, of course, has black points; and the eyes would look lustrous black from the wide pupil, even if the iris be dark blue-grey. The lady of the Sonnets had cheeks like the grey of the dawn set off by the morning sun, and hair like "black wires." Ariosto's Alcyna had exactly the same resplendent black eyes, and hair like "golden wires."

Soon after Shakespeare's acquaintance with young Herbert began, in the spring of 1598, the latter had got to know also the lady who was the poet's mistress: one can imagine a meeting between my Lord Rose and my Lady Rosaline. The Sonnets do not leave us any choice in conceiving the sense in which the Dark Lady was Shakespeare's mistress: in whatever witty pleasantries the acquaintance may have begun, it became an ordinary amour at length, as appears from S. 138, which was printed surreptitiously as early as 1599. She tried to capture Lord Herbert, or Lord Herbert tried to capture her. Shakespeare forgave the "trespass" when Herbert begged pardon, although he accuses himself of being more corrupt as an accessory to the

## MISTRESS FITTON

theft than if he had been the principal, and therefore will avoid Herbert in public—

Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame.

The situation is almost exactly that which he has created in ‘The Two Gentlemen of Verona,’ Valentine, “that peasant” (V. i. 36) being Shakespeare and Proteus Herbert : it looks, indeed, as if the name Proteus were implied in S. 53 :

What is your substance, whereof are you made,  
That millions of strange shadows on you tend ?

Proteus plays him false with Silvia, and expresses heart-felt sorrow for what he had done ; whereupon Valentine forgives him like a Christian, and hands the lady over to him. In five or six of the eight sonnets to Herbert on the theft of the mistress, there are peculiar sentiments or phrases, which can be matched closely in ‘The Two Gentlemen of Verona,’ although it would not be so easy to match them anywhere else. One set of commentators have been as much surprised at the supine conduct of Valentine in the play as another set have been surprised at Shakespeare’s own conduct in the Sonnets. There seems little doubt that he recalled the situation deliberately in the play in order that he might treat it exactly as he had done in real life. We know from Meres that he had the play in his desk in the autumn of 1598, and there is not another known reference to it, earlier or later, until its appearance in print in the folio of 1623. Johnson was struck by the number of its gnomic sayings and “eminently beautiful” single lines or passages ; while Pope could not understand why a play of such “natural and unaffected style” should have been diagnosed by the experts to be “one of the first he wrote.” Whether on the ground of internal evidence or of external, there is absolutely no reason for dating it before 1598. The hurried conclusion of the play proves nothing as to early date ;

## HER THREE WILLS

for the same evidence of haste is found in ‘As You Like It,’ which was certainly new in 1599 or 1600.

This comedy has a bearing upon the Sonnets in another way. Silvia has a third lover, Sir Thurio, a “foolish” rival to Valentine, but a personage of some rank at the Court of Milan. Shakespeare’s mistress had also three lovers. The alert eyes of Mr. William Archer were the first to discover that there were really three Wills in S. 135 :

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*,  
And *Will* to boot, and *Will* in overplus ;  
More than enough am I that vex thee still,  
To thy sweet will making addition thus.

When the *Gossip from a Muniment Room* appeared, the suspected third Will was forthcoming at once in the person of Sir William Knollys, Comptroller of the Queen’s Household, and a cousin to her Majesty once removed. He is the “parti-beard” of the ballad, who was “afeard” when the scandal arose. He was about fifty-five years old in 1598, and married to a dowager-countess of great wealth and of more years than his own. His lodging at Court was next door to the Maids’ Chamber, the high jinks of which were apt to disturb his peace : L’Estrange relates that he struck terror into his noisy neighbours one night by walking into their room in his shirt through the postern door, and pacing it for an hour so intent upon his book as to seem unconscious of any human presence. When Mary Fitton came to Court in 1595 or 1596, aged seventeen or eighteen, her father had begged Knollys, a connection of the Fittons, to watch over her. Sir William replied, “I will not fail to fulfil your desire in playing the good shepherd, and will to my power defend the innocent lamb from the wolfish cruelty and fox-like subtlety of the tame beasts of this place.” His letters to her sister Anne, which begin about 1597-98, exhibit him as Mary’s avowed lover and suitor, and

## MISTRESS FITTON

as praying (and asking his correspondent to pray) that he might be released from his aged wife so that he might marry her and beget offspring. In a letter early in 1598, when his correspondent was expecting her first confinement, he wishes her “a good delivery of your burden, and your sister in the same case justifiable.” Again : “She is now well, and hath not been troubled with the mother [hysteria] of a long time. I would to God I might as lawfully make her a mother as you are.” In another letter : “Her greatest fear is, that while the grass groweth the horse may starve, and she thinketh a bird in the bush is worth two in the hand. But both she and I must have patience.” After her disgrace in 1601, for which Lord Pembroke was plausibly but wrongly blamed, he wrote : “I must confess the harvest was over long expected. . . . The man of sin [not Pembroke] having in the night sowed tares amongst the good corn, both the true husbandman was beguiled and the good ground abused.” In 1603, when she was with her sister in Warwickshire, he sent her a message that he could not “separate his thoughts from the remembrance of former bands” ; “no earthly creature is mistress of my love, nor is like to be” ; if he were not tied to a white staff at Court, he would become a knight adventurer on her behalf. It is clear, however, that the lady answered these strangely renewed overtures either curtly or not at all. His wife died in 1605, and in two months after he married Lady Elizabeth Howard, aged nineteen. Sir William was one of Elizabeth’s Privy Council and a member of Parliament ; in her speech from the Throne at the prorogation of the Parliament before Christmas 1601 she gave Mr. Comptroller, along with Mr. Speaker, her special thanks for his services. The Queen also gave him a pension of forty pounds a year in July 1601 (MS. Patent Enrolments), paid him a visit at his house, Grays, near Caversham, in the autumn, and promoted him to be Treasurer of the Household.

## SIR WILLIAM KNOLLYS

at Christmas 1602. James I. made him a baron and a viscount and a Knight of the Garter, and Charles I. raised him to the earldom of Banbury.

It is by the merest accident that we know of his long courtship of Mary Fitton, and of his ardent desire to be free to marry her, which perhaps few knew of at the time. In one of his letters to her sister he wrote, “Burn my letters, if you please”; but they were not burned,—they are actually printed, and in a second edition! Sir William was by no means a libertine, but a studious religious man. His father, Sir Francis, was zealous in the Protestant cause, and chose as his son’s tutor one who was so well disposed to bear witness, that he suffered at the stake in the persecutions under Mary. Sir William, thus brought up, was always something of a Puritan. It has been surmised that his phrase “the true husbandman,” contrasting with “the man of sin,” implies an informal contract, and that this was what Shakespeare meant in addressing Mistress Fitton in the phrase of S. 152, “in act thy bed-vow broke.” If that be so, he meant also that she broke her bed-vow with the other party to it, the vow being pre-nuptial. In ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ a certain question and answer are brought in with no apparent object, and probably with some veiled reference which those present at Court in 1597 would understand: the question is asked by Biron, about Rosaline (according to the Cambridge editors), who wore a cap:

*Biron.* Is she wedded or no?

*Boyet.* To her will, sir, or so.

This looks like the ever-recurring pun upon Will; and it is not impossible that “or so” means that Sir William was understood to be contracted to the maid-of-honour, pending the demise of the old Lady Chandos, his wife.

“Fitton’s afflictions and her commitment to my

## MISTRESS FITTON

"Lady Hawkyns" are heard of first in the letter of 26th January 1601, to Sir G. Carew, in Ireland. On 5th February Sir Robert Cecil wrote also to him: "We have no news, but that there is a misfortune befallen Mistress Fitton, for she is proved with child, and the Earl of Pembroke, being examined, confesseth a fact, but utterly renounceth all marriage. I fear they will both dwell in the Tower a while, for the Queen hath vowed to send them thither." On 25th March Sir Tobie Mathew wrote to Dudley Carleton: "The Earl of Pembroke is committed to the Fleet. His cause is delivered of a boy, who is dead." On 22nd April Sir Edward Fitton wrote to his daughter Anne: "I am in some hope of your sister's enlargement, but what will be the end with the Earl I cannot tell." On his way down into Cheshire with her, in a stolen flight from London, Sir Edward Fitton wrote to Sir Robert Cecil on 16th May from Stanner, where he was resting owing to his daughter's weakness: "I can say nothing of the Earl, but my daughter is confident in her chance before God, and wisheth my Lord and she might but meet before in different scenes. But for myself I expect no good from him, that in all this time hath not showed any kindness. I count my daughter as good a gentlewoman as my Lord is, though [excepting] the dignity of honour, which hath beguiled her, I fear, except my Lord's honesty be the greater virtuous."<sup>1</sup> It appears from a letter of Pembroke's from Whitehall, 8th May, touching the renewal of a bill, that he was then at large again.

We may now return to the Sonnets. Herbert's first affair with the Dark Lady does not appear to have

<sup>1</sup> Letter among the Cecil Papers, printed by Mr. Tyler. The use of "virtuous" at the end appears to be in the same sense as that of "virtue" in the last line of the 117th Sonnet, said of the same person, in his relation to the same lady:

Since my appeal says I did strive to prove  
The constancy and virtue of your love,—

meaning generosity, or more than bare duty.

## SHAKESPEARE'S LAMENESS

been so serious as Shakespeare suspected at the time ; for he wrote later in S. 70 (spring of 1599) :

Thou hast pass'd by the ambush of young days,  
Either not assail'd, or victor being charged ;

and in S. 144, which was printed surreptitiously in 1599, the lady is referred to as “wooing his purity with her foul pride.” But after that, and more especially after the episode of the rival poet, he writes several sonnets to Herbert on his licentiousness (which Clarendon does not extenuate in his character), making references to a base jewel on a queen’s finger and to his own “lameness” (the lameness of Vulcan as the cause of the infidelity of Venus : compare *Odyssey*, viii. 310, Davison’s epigram “On a limping cuckold,” and the “lame and impotent” of ‘Othello’), the phrase being the same that was used in S. 37 on the occasion of Herbert’s original trespass. This was probably the time, the summer of 1599, to which belongs a piece of gossip printed by Mr. Tyler from a paper in the Record Office : it relates to certain clandestine marriages “at the Courte, in that tyme that M<sup>rs</sup> Fytton was in great favour, and one of her Majesties maids of honor ; and duringe the time that the Earle of Pembroke favord her, she would put off her head tire and tucke upp her clothes, and take a large white cloake, and marche as though she had bene a man, to meete the said Earle out of the Courte.”

We hear a good deal about Lord Herbert at this time in the letters written from London to his uncle, Sir Robert Sidney, at Flushing. He was much with the Court at Nonesuch and Hampton Court. On 4th August 1599, “Lord Herbert means to follow the camp,” and wants a certain horse of his uncle’s from the stables at Penshurst : this was the muster on account of the threatened Spanish invasion, to which the Earl, his father, furnished two hundred mounted

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men. The muster of August 1599 was almost certainly the occasion of S. 91 :

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,

—and “some in their horse.” In October Herbert went on an embassy to Denmark (“great entertainment”). Shortly after his return he went to his father in Wiltshire, and was away from London several months, until March 1600, being ill most of the time with “a tertian ague,” and with continual pains in his head. This illness was so serious that an attempted journey to London in February had to be given up. Meanwhile Mistress Fitton had to leave her duties at Court for several weeks. On 12th January 1600, “Mrs. Fitton is sick, and gone from Court to her father.” She had not really left London, for, on 21st February, “My lady [Sir R. Sidney’s wife] visited Mrs. Fitton, that hath long been here sick in London.” The “sickness” appears to have been the natural fruit of her amour with Lord Herbert, for it corresponds exactly in time with the incident of the same kind which forms the subject of the 99th Sonnet, written in the early spring of 1600 :

The forward violet thus did I chide :—

“Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,  
If not from my love’s breath? The purple pride  
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells  
In my love’s veins thou hast too grossly dyed.”

These lines, and the following allegory of roses, become intelligible in the hypothesis of a still-born premature child :

The Roses fearfully on thorns did stand,  
One blushing shame, another white despair ;  
A third, nor red nor white, had stolen of both,  
And to his robbery had annex’d thy breath ;  
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth  
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.

The forward violet is the premature flower of spring ;

## THE CANKERED ROSEBUD

the violet is a small pansy ; and the pansy was the Fitton emblem. · The sonnet is singular in having fifteen lines, the extra line being the fifth—

In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.

To express both its form and its matter, it might be headed “A superfluous line,” a “line” too many, an unwished-for progeny. This interpretation of S. 99 is necessary as a key to nearly all those that follow to the end.

The sonnets from 100 to the fall of the curtain in S. 125 are the most enigmatic of the whole series. The obscurity is less often playful than sombre, with a tone of irony which rises before the end to sarcasm. They are the sonnets that show in the highest degree the quality of “deep brained” which he claims for the sonnet as a lyric form. This point has been touched upon already, and it remains only to add here, that in a farcical dialogue in ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ he defines the purpose of the *envoi* :

No, page : it is an epilogue or discourse to make plain  
Some obscure precedence that hath before been sain.

Most of this sequence have not only an obscure precedence but also the *envoi* obscure, yet the clarifying or crystallising function of the latter is shown very curiously in some of them. It is not, however, a question of structure that must concern us here, nor even admiration of their depth, ingenuity, delicacy, and subtlety, which Shakespeare displays nowhere more than in these five-and-twenty sonnets ; but it is the personal matter of them, or the story in them. It is the same story that has been outlined from external and authentic sources at the beginning of the chapter ; but here we have it proceeding from week to week in the correspondence between the poet and Lord Herbert. Mistress Fitton’s second misfortune (the first that was known to the world), the hapless infant which cost all that pain to

## MISTRESS FITTON

seek its father, must have been known to Shakespeare sooner than most. It is clear that he had been in the lady's confidence, and that he did all he could to save her from the disaster which overtook her before long. There was only one way to do it—to induce Lord Herbert to own the coming child, and to "justify" the mother by marriage, as Lord Southampton had done just two years before in the case of another of the maids of honour, Mistress Vernon. The moral ground of this stratagem was the previous still-born fruit, of which Herbert was actually the father; there was no legal or equitable claim upon him at all in the second case, as Shakespeare knew. The poet was not influential in such a matter, but he could be at least tenderly persuasive, and he could dazzle by his amazing skill, and perhaps gain his end by his wit.

The arduous enterprise begins, in the 100th Sonnet, with a formal invocation of the Muse, which is prolonged into the next. There had been a long break in the correspondence, from the spring of 1600 until about the first weeks of 1601 :

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long,—

and so on to the practical matter which was his object in resuming correspondence with Lord Herbert :

Then do thy office, Muse ; I teach thee how  
To make him seem long hence as he shows now.

This is the constant theme of the first series of seventeen sonnets, when the project was of another marriage :

Who will believe my verse in time to come, . . .  
And stretched metre of an antique song.  
But were some child of yours alive that time,  
You should live twice—in it, and in my rhyme.

The first pointed hint is in S. 103 :

Look in your glass, and there appears a face  
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,  
Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.

## THE IMPENDING CHILD

His glass was not his looking-glass, but his divining-glass. Herbert would see in it the face of something impending, a face that was quite beyond the power of the poet's blunt invention to fashion, that dulled his lines, and did him disgrace.

The next, "To me, fair friend, you never can be old," contains the recital of the seasons which had passed since their acquaintance began, with the emphasis on the *Autumn* seasons, "childing autumn," as he calls it elsewhere. This leads up to something called "beauty" that was moving imperceptibly from its "figure" like the hand upon a dial, "and no pace perceived":

So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,  
Hath motion, *and mine eye may be deceived.*

For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred,  
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

The three next sonnets are an interruption of the argument, the occasions being Lord Herbert's accession to the earldom of Pembroke, the poet's visit to Salisbury to bear the canopy at the old earl's funeral, and the rebellion of Lord Essex on the 8th of February 1601. The 108th is the most explicit hitherto in suggesting to his lordship that the former still-born child should count for the coming one in respect of the paternity; this is done under the figurative cover, as always, of their own constancy to each other:

What's in the brain that ink may character,  
Which hath not figur'd to you my true spirit,  
What's new to speak, what new to register,  
That may express my love, or thy dear merit?  
Nothing, sweet boy; but yet, like prayers divine,  
I must each day say o'er the very same,  
*Counting no old thing old*, thou mine, I thine,  
Even as when first I hallow'd thy fair name.  
So that eternal love, *in love's fresh case*,  
Weighs not the dust and injury of age,  
Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place,  
But makes antiquity for aye his page,  
Finding the first conceit of love there bred  
Where time and outward form would show it dead.

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Observe the function of the *envoi* to make plain the obscure precedence. The terms are all physiological in their literal sense—conception, generation, formation, and death ; it is the former offspring which, although dead, was still the first conceit of love, and should live eternally as a moral obligation.

The next four sonnets appear to have been called forth as a reply to something that Lord Pembroke (as he now was) had said in expostulation. They are all concerned with the poet's own disabilities in his humble station of life, and contain several incidental things of the deepest interest for his career as a playwright and player, some of which are referred to in later chapters. But he sweeps aside all those public worries, to resume his *purpose* :

You are so strongly in my purpose bred,  
That all the world methinks besides y' are dead.

Let us resume the main theme with S. 115, leaving the two preceding it to be taken after. Its ostensible subject is “Love a-growing” :

Those lines that I before have writ do lie,  
Even those that said I could not love you dearer.

The ten following lines are turned ingeniously to show how he had been mistaken in setting bounds to the growth of love : this is not to be taken literally ; the whole sonnet is an artifice to lead up to the barbed *envoi* :

Love is a Babe : then might I not say so,  
To give full growth to that which still doth grow.

If we recall the fact that Pembroke was about to be, if he were not already, charged with the scandal of Mistress Fitton, the Babe becomes the impending real infant, and no metaphor. The two last lines are meant to bring before him, in one momentary swift glance at “that which still doth grow,” the poor lady's condition by its outward show, pathetic always, and calculated to

## SHAKESPEARE'S "GREAT MIND"

affect every humane man in the way that it used to affect my uncle Toby.

Let us now go back to the mysterious pair, 113 and 114. They are "deep brained" to the last degree. In the former he mentions, as a matter of curious psychological interest, that of late he has been seeing the features of his correspondent in objects and aspects of nature, whether rude or gentle, sweet-favoured or deformed, sea or mountain, day or night; more especially if his vision sees the Crow or Dove "it shapes them to your feature." He had received so many of these impressions from external objects that his mind was "replete with you" and "incapable of more." The next sonnet continues the idea by bringing in "monsters and things indigest" (unformed embryos), which the poet may have changed by the alchemy of love into "such cherubins as your sweet self resemble"; so its chief purpose is to put the question, whether this is only "flattery in my seeing" or "mine eye saith true"? Let the answer be noted :

Oh, 'tis the first ; 'tis flattery in my seeing,  
And my great mind most kingly drinks it up :  
Mine eye well knows what with his gust is 'greeing,  
And to his palate doth prepare the cup :  
If it be poison'd, 'tis the lesser sin,  
That mine eyc loves it and doth first begin.

The meaning is, that it is flattery to make Lord Pembroke the father of the child, but that Shakespeare has a "great mind" to do so: if the cup of flattery be a poisoned cup, there is the less sin in offering it to him, in that he is not taken unawares, but has seen it tasted by the king's taster.

The sonnet following "Love is a Babe" is the famous and noble poem :

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments : love is not love  
Which alters where it alteration finds.

## MISTRESS FITTON

The form is general or abstract, but the substance is the concrete case of Pembroke “utterly renouncing all marriage” with Mary Fitton. It is a moving appeal, which may or may not have preceded his lordship’s refusal of marriage when he was examined at Court. The love that a woman in her trouble has a right to look for is declared in the next lines :

O no ! it is an ever fixed mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken :  
It is the star to every wandering bark.

The “rosy lips and cheeks” swept away by Time’s sickle, and the “brief hours and weeks” that suffice to make Time’s changes, point to the special circumstances wherein

Love is not love  
Which alters where it alteration finds.

The uncertainty as to what his lordship would do explains the line said of the star in the heavens—

Whose worth’s unknown although his height be taken.

The two next sonnets, 117 and 118, are Shakespeare’s apology for interfering, and are probably the answer to an angry remonstrance as in ‘A Lover’s Complaint’:

Yet if men moved him, was he such a storm, etc.

In S. 118 the figures are all drawn from dietary and medicines—sharp sauces to whet, and purges to ward off sickness. The suggestion is, not only of going out to meet trouble, but of doing so for another’s sake ; while the “policy in love, to anticipate the ills that were not,” is more particularly the policy of coming to an understanding as to the paternity of the child before it was born. However, his well-meant attempt had merely the effect of “poisoning” himself.

Sonnet 119 points to an interview between Shakespeare and the lady, which had probably taken place

## THE SIREN'S TEARS

before the Queen knew of her condition and had committed her to the keeping of Lady Hawkyns :

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears  
Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within,  
Applying fears to hopes, and hopes to fears,  
Still losing when I saw myself to win ?  
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,  
Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never ?  
How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted  
In the distraction of this madding fever ?  
O benefit of ill ! now I find true,  
That better is by evil still made better ;  
And ruin'd love, when it is built anew,  
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.  
So I return rebuk'd to my content,  
And gain by ills thrice more than I have spent.

With the tears there had been confessions, which opened his eyes and filled him with dismay. The close of the sonnet means that the potion of her tears had proved a love philtre, for his ruined love was built anew, fairer, stronger, far greater than at first. We know from Sonnets 147-150 that it was at one time an infatuation. The Siren's tears moved him to some more decided step on her behalf than he had yet taken. In the next sonnet, 120, we learn that he had done some unkindness, trespass, transgression, or tyrannical action against Lord Pembroke, with the result that his lordship had "passed a Hell of time," supposed in the shock of his feelings, but corresponding also with his imprisonment in the Fleet. He sets this unkindness against the unkindness that Herbert had before done to him, and expresses his sorrow that events had moved too fast in their "night of woe" to afford leisure for applying such a salve to his lordship's wound as the latter had formerly done to his (S. 34). Whether or not he visited Pembroke in prison to fulfil that purpose, some communication must have passed between them before the next sonnet, 121, was written. This is a sonnet of great moment. Mr. Armitage Brown (1838), who had the delightful

## MISTRESS FITTON

privilege of talking over all these difficulties with Landor, says that it is the one that gave him most trouble, while others have taken it in a terribly matter-of-fact sense. He is, as usual, playing upon words :

'Tis better to be vile than vile esteemed,  
When not to be receives reproach of being,  
And the just pleasure lost, which is so deemed,  
Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing.

Mr. Brown paraphrases thus : “ A man that is slandered is in a worse state than if his enemies spoke the truth ; inasmuch as he does not enjoy those advantages which, according to them, his bad conduct has acquired.” But he would have the support of a good conscience, and the qualifying clauses cannot touch that ethical principle. In the first “vile,” as well as in the “bad” of the *envoi*, there is something concealed ; probably “bad” is to be read backwards, otherwise the fourteenth line is pointless and nonsensical. “Vile” is to be taken in the sense of his motto to ‘Venus and Adonis’ : “*Vilia miretur vulgus,*” etc.—“let the vulgar admire vile things.” Public opinion would think none the worse of Lord Pembroke if he owned the child laid at his door ; but it would esteem him vile if he held aloof. The subject is the disputed paternity of the child : that, we shall see, is the only possible meaning of the phrase, “Give salutation to my sportive blood,” which dominates the whole sonnet. We should therefore paraphrase : “ 'Tis better to be the father than to be esteemed vile, when not to be so receives yet reproach of being, and the just pleasure of paternity is lost—not as *we* feel it, but as *she* sees it.” That Lord Pembroke was really in that fix follows from the known fact that it was his name which common rumour had joined with that of Mistress Fitton in 1599. After the first four lines the sonnet passes by an ellipsis, marked only by a “for,” to Shakespeare himself as charged by some one with the paternity. This idea is scouted :

## DOUBTFUL PATERNITY

For why should others' false adulterate eyes  
Give salutation to my sportive blood ?  
Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,  
Which in their Wills count bad what I think good ?  
No, I am that I am, and they that level  
At my abuses reckon up their own.

The meaning of these much misunderstood lines must be sought in the remarkable phrase, " Give salutation to my sportive blood." There is only one other instance of it known in literature, and that is also Shakespeare's. The instance cited by Mr. Grant White from Daniel's *Civil Wars* does not apply strictly, although Shakespeare may have got the hint there of joining " salute " and " blood " in one phrase : it is that of Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry IV., entering London amidst the plaudits of the citizens, the captive king, Richard II., following unregarded ; as he returned the people's salutations, he " felt his blood within salute his state." The real parallel is a scene of 'Henry VIII.', which Mr. James Spedding, in his analysis of the dual authorship, assigns beyond all question to Shakespeare. The words are spoken by Anne Boleyn. She had met the King once, and had danced with him. The Lord Chamberlain is sent to salute her as Marchioness of Pembroke, and on leaving he says, supposed in an aside :

And who knows yet  
But from this lady may proceed a gem  
To lighten all this isle ?

Anne murmurs, " This is strange to me," and, when she is at length left at peace by the duenna, continues to cast it in her mind :

Would I had no being,  
If this salute my blood a jot !

It is the same kind of salutation as in Luke i. 13, and again in verses 28 and 29, the former case being made a jest of by Charmian in ' Antony and Cleopatra,' I. ii. 27. It is the annunciation of parentage to persons of

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either sex ; and in S. 121 it is an annunciation of paternity ; which is rejected, because the eyes that make it are those of a false adulterate person, and for other and curious reasons, which could be construed from the profoundly cryptic phraseology if the physiological nature of the subject admitted. The *envoi* is humorous :

By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown ;  
Unless this general evil they maintain—  
All men are bad, and in their badness reign ;

—the double absurdity that “all” may procreate and “all” be father to one child,—“all” monarchs upon one throne. This is doubtless the friendly jest of “the onlie begetter” in the dedication of the Sonnets to Mr. W. H. eight years after (see p. 19, *supra*).

In the two next sonnets, 122 and 123, we may discover the real nature of the unkindness, trespass, or tyranny done to Lord Pembroke, which is mentioned first in S. 120. Sonnet 122 is all about a table-book :

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain  
Full character'd with lasting memory.

Both knew the contents (“thy record”) of this private diary so well that neither had any need to retain it ; Pembroke because he would not miss what he wished to forget, the poet for a sarcastic reason :

Nor need I tallies thy dear love to score ;  
Therefore to give them from me was I bold.

This pocket-book, filled with memoranda, was probably the same that he had given to Herbert as a blank-book in S. 77 ; the entries in it when he got it back would have been such as are referred to in the Rose sonnet, 95, already cited :

That tongue that tells the story of thy days—  
(Making lascivious comments on thy sport).

The poet had given away this diary to a third party, which was a very serious trespass or unkindness.

## THE ONLIE BEGETTER

There was only one person to whom the diary would have been of use just then—namely, Mistress Fitton : in her hands it might be used to strengthen the claim of filiation which she and her relatives made upon Lord Pembroke ; and it may have been by that means that the presumption against him, notwithstanding his denial, was raised so high as to warrant his arrest. At all events, Shakespeare connects his lordship's “Hell of time” with his own tyrannical exercise of some power that he held over him.

The sonnet on the table-book is followed by one which is the most enigmatic of the series. Ostensibly it is an apostrophe to Time in respect of his essential sameness amidst changing circumstances : the writer professes a philosophic indifference to these new performances of an old play, and in so doing contrives to drag in the words “foist,” “dates,” and “born to our desire.” Moreover, he defies Time’s registers, which do lie, being “made more or less by thy continual haste.” The irony is an ingenious development of the thesis, that one who has had a child laid at his door should not scrutinise the period of his amour too closely : he is the father of the child “more or less”; if he be not the father of that child, it is all one that he was father of the preceding. Such at least is the poet’s own view of the matter. The figure in the second line is anatomical :

No ! Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change.  
Thy pyramids built up with newer might  
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange :  
They are but dressings of a former sight.  
Our dates are brief ; and therefore we admire  
What thou dost foist upon us that is old,  
And rather make them born to our desire  
Than think that we before have heard them told.  
Thy registers and thee I both defy,  
Not wondering at the present nor the past ;  
For thy records, and what we see, doth lie,  
Made more or less by thy continual haste.  
This I do vow, and this shall ever be :  
I will be true despite thy scythe and thee.

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In the next sonnet, 124, the irony rises higher. It is all upon the poor infant, which had perished unfathered soon after it was born :

If my dear love were but the child of State,  
It might for fortune's bastard be unfathered ;—

and so on for twelve lines, his dear love being happily not subject to the disabilities and misfortunes of an accidental offspring. The *envoi* is a grammatical curiosity :

To this I witness call the foles [foals] of time,  
Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime ;

—which die for the good of those by whose crime they had life. The editors have been unanimous in taking “foles” to be a corruption of the text, most of them reading “fools”—without being any the wiser themselves.

Sonnet 125 brings us to the final rupture with Lord Pembroke, and the fall of the curtain. It recalls some great funeral at which Shakespeare had borne the canopy, almost certainly that of Pembroke’s father in Salisbury Cathedral in the end of January preceding, to which he had received the honour of an invitation. But even that compliment fails to conciliate him :

Werc’t aught to me I bore the canopy ?

These obsequies, like those in ‘Hamlet,’ were but the trappings and the suits of woe, and the formality of them leads him to speak of the mistaken policy of keeping up the pretence of friendship when the reality of it is gone :

No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,

and let the burial of friendship be mutual and as thorough on the one side as on the other :

And take thou my oblation, poor but free,  
Which is not mix’d with seconds, knows no art ;

## A FRIENDSHIP ENDED

—the oblation-cakes of unleavened wheat which were laid on the corpse (the corpse of their dead friendship) or were offered by a vassal to a lord. He changes suddenly to a fierce and indignant note :

Hence, thou suborn'd *Informer* ! a true soul,  
When most impeacht, stands least in thy control.

We may dismiss the idea of these being wild and whirling words; every one of them is deliberate, and pertinent to the cause of quarrel. Lord Pembroke had given information, doubtless in the highest quarter, which Shakespeare believed to have impeached himself in the Fitton affair untruly ; and his lordship had been suborned by some one to do so. That he had not done so of his own motion is so far in his favour, the more so that he might have been excused if he had sought to turn the tables for the giving away of his pocket-book. While it is the informer who is underlined for emphasis, it was certainly the suborner who incurred the deepest scorn. But this opens a new chapter of the story, which is pursued under another form than the lyrical of sonnets.

Coincidently with the release of Lord Pembroke from prison, which was probably at the time when the information impeaching Shakespeare was obtained from him, a sudden change came over the attitude of the Fitton family. For some reason, which was never divulged, they ceased to press the marriage with Lord Pembroke. Before the middle of May Sir Edward Fitton made a “stolen journey” with his daughter into Cheshire, which is thus referred to in a letter from her great-uncle in London to her sister in Warwickshire : “I suppose your father, by his stolen journey into Cheshire, hath acquainted you with something concerning your sister's estate—how true, I know not, for I find halting with me in their courses for her.”

There is a linking sonnet, 127, between the series addressed to Herbert and the shorter series written at

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various times to the Dark Lady. It is the old idea of dark features in ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ and in S. 132, now adapted to the circumstances of her disgrace—her eyes and brows mourning for herself as “slandered with a bastard shame,” with “no name” (of a husband), “no holy bower” (of marriage), “but is profaned” (by idle tongues), “if not lives in disgrace.” There is no mistaking the warmth of the sympathy, as well as the deep satire upon those ladies who slander “creation” with a false esteem :

In the old age black was not counted fair,  
Or if it were, it bore not beauty’s name :  
But now is black beauty’s successive heir,  
And Beauty slander’d with a bastard shame.  
For since each hand hath put on Nature’s power,  
Fairing the foul with art’s false borrow’d face,  
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,  
But is profan’d, if not lives in disgrace.  
Therefore my Mistress’ eyes [brows] are raven black,  
Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem  
At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,  
Slandering Creation with a false esteem.  
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,  
That every tongue says beauty should look so.

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Before leaving the Sonnets to follow the two principal themes of them into certain of the plays, I will refer here to two of their incidental subjects, which do not come into any subsequent context.

The 60th Sonnet brings us to Christmas 1598, or to the New Year 1599; perhaps the occasion in the Calendar which called it forth should be taken as the whole feast of the Nativity, from Christmas Day to the eve of the Epiphany—the rising of the Star. Beginning with four beautiful lines on the spent moments, the sonnet changes abruptly to Nativity, which is treated under astrological figures of speech, but clearly means the Nativity of our Lord :

## A CHRISTMAS SONNET

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,  
So do our minutes hasten to their end ;  
Each changing place with that which goes before,  
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.  
Nativity, once in the main of light,  
Crawls to maturity ; wherewith being crown'd,  
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,  
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.  
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,  
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,  
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,  
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.  
And yet to Time's inhope my verse shall stand,  
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

I do not know any place in all his writings where Shakespeare has shown us so much of his mind upon the subject of religious belief. Born only a generation after the Reformation, his father almost certainly continuing a Roman Catholic, and himself brought up among decent Warwickshire folk who still retained their ancestral medieval ways and habits of thought, he saw all around him in his manhood the same phenomenon which has been called in our time the Eclipse of Faith. He was, of course, familiar with the Machiavellian principles of Marlowe and Kyd among the poets, and of Raleigh among the statesmen, and knew as well how to express them in characters as if they were his own. The modern expansion had brought free thinking as well as adventurous action ; and where there was strictness of belief, it was apt to be that of the sanctimonious pirate who went to sea with the Ten Commandments and struck out one of them (perhaps Sir John Hawkins). What the sonnet expresses is the change from faith and obedience to reason and freedom, "the inevitable movement onward," the devouring tooth of time feeding on "the rarities of nature's truth."

It is obvious from many places in his writings that Shakespeare treated religious belief with more than formal respect ; and I suspect from his Christmas

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sonnet that he would have been conservative of the old forms of worship, perhaps even of the old creeds, which were inevitably crumbling. The statement by a Gloucestershire parson, two generations or more after his death, that “he died a papist” is not incredible. The last lines that he may be supposed to have written, in the Epilogue to ‘*The Tempest*,’ are a pious wish of Prospero that he might compose his mind and purge his faults by prayer. Almost literally was he born in medieval England, and in natural piety the child was father of the man.

Another sonnet, the 106th, shows him in the complementary colour of a son of modern Europe. This sonnet was a favourite with Charles Lamb, although one rather doubts whether he had analysed its meaning to the bottom :

When in the chronicle of wasted time  
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,  
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme,  
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights ;  
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,  
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,  
I see their antique pen would have expressed  
Even such a beauty as you master now.  
So all their praises are but prophecies  
Of this our time, all you prefiguring ;  
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,  
They had not skill enough your worth to sing :  
For we, which now behold these present days,  
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

This comes immediately before the sonnet on the rebellion of Lords Essex and Southampton on the 8th of February 1601, and may have been written about the beginning of February. The date is that of the funeral of the second Earl of Pembroke in Salisbury Cathedral, at which Shakespeare “bore the canopy.” In journeying down to Salisbury, he would have passed through Winchester, where he would have seen the famous Round Table, with the figures of King Arthur

## A SONNET AT SALISBURY

and his knights, bringing to his mind the *Orlando Furioso*, the *Faërie Queene*, and the whole literature of chivalry. Proceeding to Salisbury, he would have seen in the Cathedral the recumbent effigies and the brasses of many knights and ladies. The former recalled their ecstatic praises in the chronicle of wasted time ; then, at Salisbury, he found “the blazon,” the actual revelation of “sweet beauty’s best”—the best that sweet beauty could show of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow (all pointing to effigies) ; and he was struck by the incongruity between the romance and the reality. He saw that the antique pens would have expressed even such a beauty as that of the young Lord Pembroke himself, who resembled his uncle Sir Philip Sidney, the paragon of the modern world :

So all their praises are but prophecies  
Of this our time, all you prefiguring.

The modern time was more worthy of praise than the olden ; he found more to admire, but less to say :

For we, which now behold these present days,  
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

It was a dexterous compliment, but none the less an honest expression of his admiration for the men and women of his own time, whom he has represented for us in his plays.



**BOOK II**  
**PROSPERO'S STORY OF HIS LIFE**



## CHAPTER IV

### THE REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST': FIRST SERIES

'THE TEMPEST' holds a peculiar place among Shakespeare's plays. Although it was almost certainly his last completed work, it stands first in the Folio; its text is unusually free from errors, as if it had received his last touches; and it may be safely assumed that it was found at the top of the pile of papers, or otherwise marked as meant to be the first play in the book. It is, indeed, an Introduction to all the rest, an allegory of the author's life, all that we have from himself in the way of biography.<sup>1</sup> Every one admits that Prospero is

<sup>1</sup> Some such view of 'The Tempest' was maintained by an able French critic, M. Émile Montégut, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1st Aug. 1865: "Une Hypothèse sur la Tempête de Shakspeare." I quote two passages to show how far he went: "La Tempête est très évidemment la dernière pièce de Shakespeare, et n'est autre chose, sous une forme allegorique, que le testament dramatique du grand poète, ses adieux à ce public fidèle par lequel il avait fait applaudu dans le court espace de vingt-cinq ans" (p. 733). The most particular identification is at p. 747: "Et cependant cette île ainsi transfigurée par Prospero avait été l'objet de bien des calomnies; sa fécondité avait été niée, les enchantemens de son souverain révoqués en doute. Shakespeare, dans cette histoire allegorique de sa vie, n'oublie même pas les envieux qui le harcelèrent de leurs dénigremens et de leurs rancunes. Rappelez-vous la conversation qui ouvre le seconde acte, et les acerbes railleries dont l'île enchantée est l'objet, de la part de Sébastien et d'Antonio, quelque George Chapman et quelque John Marston, poussés par la jalouse et la haine, peut-être aussi par les instigations de ce dogue de Ben Jonson, grand poète et caractère antipathique, dont les relations avec Shakespeare, pour le dire à sa honte, ne furent jamais pures d'hypocrisie." The sequel will show how differently I identify the personages of that scene; but M. Montégut's general view of 'The Tempest' as "an allegorical history of his life" is right.

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

Shakespeare, by reason of the moving speech of the fourth Act in which he takes leave of the stage, beginning at the words, "Our revels now are ended." But that is not the end of the play. In the last Act he settles scores with "all mine enemies," who had been put on board a ship and wrecked upon his island so that they might attend that audit; having forgiven them, with varying degrees of cordiality, he will retire him "to my Milan, where every third thought shall be my grave," to end his days at peace with the world, and in composing his mind by prayer.

The ship which is to carry them all from the island is lying in a creek ready to sail, as the boatswain reports :

Tight and yare and bravely rigg'd as when  
We first put out to sea.

But Prospero decides that she shall not sail until the morning, so that he may offer the hospitality of his cave for one night to his quondam enemies, promising to make a part of it go quick away with discourse of "the story of my life." Alonso accepts the invitation, saying,

I long  
To hear the story of your life, which must  
Take the ear strangely.

And Prospero answers, "I'll deliver all."

The story of Prospero's life, which all the world has been longing to hear for two centuries, and will long to hear only the more as time runs on, was told ostensibly behind the scenes, in that cave of the island. But that is only the Shakespearian irony. It is the same irony that he had used once before in his other great enigmatic play of 'Hamlet,' where Horatio, having remained in life by Hamlet's wish, "to tell my story," announces the heads of the revelation that he has to make, and bids "the yet unknowing world" assemble in the market-place of Elsinore to hear it, ending with

## PROSPERO'S ENEMIES

nearly the same phrase as Prospero's, "All this can I truly deliver."

In the enigma of Hamlet, as in the parable of Prospero, we shall find the promised revelation in the play itself—there or nowhere. 'The Tempest' contains the story of Prospero's life : of the groans of his spirit Ariel imprisoned for twelve years in a cloven pine by the spells of the foul witch Sycorax ; of that distant period, "in the dark backward and abysm of time," when Miranda could just remember that she was attended by four or five women ; of his deposition and banishment from his dukedom ; of the taming of Caliban ; and of much more in the form of parable. Among other things, we learn that his greatest enemy was his treacherous brother Antonio ; that Alonso, King of Naples, was Antonio's agent in depriving Prospero of his dukedom ; that an honest old counsellor, Gonzalo, was Prospero's best friend in his misfortune ; that Antonio, having succeeded in one usurpation, tried another, in tempting Sebastian to murder his brother and seize the crown of Naples ; that Alonso had a drunken butler, Stephano, as well as a jester, Trinculo, in his train ; that Trinculo was at one time the "good friend" of Stephano and another time beaten by him ; and that both of them were included by Prospero among "all mine enemies," and made to settle accounts with him in a manner proper to their inferior station.

Prospero being Shakespeare, as all agree, who are Prospero's enemies ? It will not do to make the one real and the others imaginary. The object of these chapters is to prove that we are given in the text of the play various witty marks of identity by which all the five "enemies"—the three princes and their two humble followers—can be recognised, as well as the three lords in attendance and the master and boatswain of the ship. In like manner the allegorical parts of Miranda, Ariel, Caliban, and Sycorax become intelligible after the key has been found to the real persons. For convenience

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

I shall state at the outset what I believe to be the reading of the parable :

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PROSPERO, the right Duke of Milan . . . . .	Shakespeare.
ANTONIO, his usurping brother . . . . .	Lord Southampton.
ALONSO, King of Naples . . . . .	Lord Pembroke.
SEBASTIAN . . . . .	Deceased Earl of Essex.
GONZALO, an honest old counsellor . . . . .	Fulke Greville.
ADRIAN, a lord . . . . .	Sir William Knollys.
FRANCISCO, a lord . . . . .	Sir Francis Bacon.
STEPHANO, a drunken butler . . . . .	Ben Jonson.
TRINCULO, a jester . . . . .	John Marston.
BOATSWAIN . . . . .	Thomas Heywood.
MASTER . . . . .	Samuel Daniel.
FERDINAND, heir to Naples . . . . .	Invented as heir to Pembroke.
MIRANDA, daughter to Prospero . . . . .	Shakespeare's Works —the prospective Folio of 1623.

Three objections to this extensive scheme of identification will arise on the threshold, which I shall deal with at once so as to get the better credence for the positive proofs. They are, firstly, that the play has been popular and intelligible without any key to it; secondly, that it would have been hazardous for Shakespeare to have settled accounts with his real enemies in a stage-play, supposing their identities recognised when it was produced at Court in 1611 or 1613; and thirdly, that there is neither contemporary evidence nor tradition that real persons were recognised in any of the characters.

(1) 'The Tempest' is a good acting play without any key to its characters, excepting, perhaps, the identification of Prospero with the great dramatist himself. It has been revived time after time since the Restoration, and has always been popular, being said, indeed, to be the most popular of the comedies with the possible exception of 'The Merchant of Venice.' It is a charming fantasy of the same kind as 'Midsummer Night's

## OBSCURE SCENES OF THE PLAY

Dream,' with the august figure of the great magician moving through it all. Farther, the idyll of Ferdinand and Miranda is sufficient plot in itself, and has been sometimes extracted as the real story of 'The Tempest.' Caliban is a quaint monster, while Stephano and Trinculo, in company with him, are good fun, even if we take them, as some not careful critics have done, for a couple of drunken "sailors." That the play should be a success in virtue of those scenes proves what a clever playwright Shakespeare was. Nearly all the rest, excepting the opening wreck scene, is obscure, tedious, apt to be cut down in the acting. There are whole scenes, extending to hundreds of lines, which clearly mean something, inasmuch as the language is pointed and the action vigorous, but yet are tedious to read and hard to act because the object of them is obscure and the wit difficult. In his long narrative to Miranda, Prospero is well aware that he is involved and prolix in relating how he lost his dukedom, for he stops three times to ask whether she is listening. Next comes another long reminiscent scene with Ariel, upon which nothing turns in the subsequent action, excepting that the island was Caliban's inheritance from his dam Sycorax. The first long scene with the three shipwrecked princes and their attendant lords is evidently witty; but there is not a commentator who can interpret the wit of the wager about the old cock and the cockerel, of widow Dido, of the four-times-mentioned fact that their garments had not been stained by salt water, of the ground being tawny with an eye of green in it. The plot between Antonio and Sebastian, to murder Alonso and seize the crown of Naples, with the incidental references to Claribel as the next heir supposing Ferdinand drowned, has nothing to do with the action of the play, and comes to an abortive end. The device of the Shapes, who bring in a feast, and of Ariel as a harpy swooping down and devouring it, is obscurity itself beside its contrasting device, the betrothal-masque of Iris, Ceres,

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

and Juno, and the dance of reapers, which is as clear as the sunlight and exquisite as the rainbow. The scene in the last Act, with a clothes-line across the stage hung with glistering apparel for Stephano and Trinculo to steal, is adhered to as an ancient tradition and out of respect to the author's great name ; but it would not be tolerated in a modern pantomime. Yet with the key it becomes the climax of the wit.

(2) Is it likely that, in a comedy which appears to have been played originally before the Court, and probably written with that view, the author would have incurred the almost certain risk of having real persons detected under his characters ? In the first place, it does not follow that the boldest and most hazardous part of the allegory, the exhibition of the Essex conspiracy with Lord Southampton's part in it, was in the play originally, or before it was first printed in 1623 ; the whole of that episode, which does not concern the main action, might easily have been introduced in preparing the copy for the press. The pointed hit at Sir Francis Bacon, as "this lord of weak remembrance," in respect of turning his back upon his old benefactor, Essex, in the memorable State Trial of 1601, would have been unwelcome to none but Bacon himself. The characterisation of Lord Knollys as Adrian is amusing and not malicious. Fulke Greville, as the honest old counsellor Gonzalo, is depicted with a warmth of admiration that any one would have been proud to merit at Shakespeare's hands, that no one else upon his stage has ever obtained. So far as concerns Lord Pembroke, who was Lord Chamberlain in 1616, and the most wholesome influence in King James's Court, his part as Alonso is hardly inferior to that of Prospero himself in grave and noble bearing. The memory of Essex, as Sebastian, is treated justly and with obvious tenderness and affection. The merciless exhibition of Ben Jonson, as Pembroke's drunken butler, and of Marston in his changing relations with Jonson, was such a retaliation

## OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

for an old envenomed attack as Shakespeare was safe to make. Jonson himself took his punishment sensibly (as Drummond assures us he always did), making no other reply than a growl at “Tempests” and “a servant-monster” (Stephano’s favourite way of addressing Caliban) in the induction to *Bartholomew Fair* (1614). By the time that ‘The Tempest’ was printed, Shakespeare had been dead seven years, and the memory of rivalries, conflicts, and hatreds hallowed in his grave. Jonson himself wrote the great appreciation to prefix to the folio, strictly just and not ungenerous. He could well afford to be magnanimous, for he was wearing the Laurel Crown which his rival could never gain, although it was his deepest ambition to possess it. Lastly, King James himself could have found nothing in ‘The Tempest’ to object to. One passage in it, near the beginning, appears to be a direct appeal to the King to rectify the unfairness with which Shakespeare had been treated in the withholding of public honour :

And by my prescience  
I find my zenith doth depend upon  
A most auspicious star, whose influence  
If now I court not but omit, my fortunes  
Will ever after droop. Here cease more questions.

(3) There is nothing recorded at the time, nor handed down by tradition, to show that real persons were recognised in the *dramatis personæ*. The one possible exception is the above reference in the induction to *Bartholomew Fair*. But of the play itself there is hardly any mention ; it is included twice in the Revels Accounts as having been played at Court ; but it is not clear that it was ever performed upon a public stage when it was new. It became known best after the Restoration, and then it was treated by Davenant and Dryden in a way that can only be called stupid, whether we see a parable in it or not. The absolute break in the continuity of tradition is shown con-

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

clusively by one signal instance. Ventriloquism, as will be shown later, is essential in the scene where Trinculo (a metathesis of *Ventriloc*, taken from Rabelais) is made to give the lie twice to Caliban, and again to Stephano, who beats him, the voice having really been thrown by Ariel from behind the scenes into the belly of Trinculo. Yet that obvious artifice is unknown to the present age in the staging of 'The Tempest,' and is not even hinted at by a single commentator. When such a tradition as that has failed, and has never been rediscovered, who shall say that many other witty things in the comedy have not been missed also? The joke of the new-coined name Trinculo, as a rearrangement of the letters of *Ventriloc* (*u* and *v* being the same letter and *e* omitted), does not appear to have been understood at the time; for the name was copied, but misspelt Trincalo (which spoils the metathesis) in the play *Albumazar*, acted before the King on 9th March 1615, in the Hall of Trinity College, Cambridge.

### GONZALO, FULKE GREVILLE

In working out this problem of concealed wit, let the reader try the same method as the writer did when he had not even an inkling of the general purport of the play. Let him begin with the part of Gonzalo. Next to Prospero, he is the person whom one suspects most to have been drawn from the life. In the list of *dramatis personæ* which Shakespeare wrote out on the fly-leaf at the end, he is marked specially as "an honest old counsellor." Prospero speaks with such real feeling of his goodness to himself, in telling Miranda the circumstances of his deposition from the dukedom, that the ingenuous girl exclaims :

Would I might  
But ever see that man !

In the last Act, when he is contemplating the spell-

## FULKE GREVILLE

bound circle of princes and attendant lords, and running them over in his mind, his eye rests with unfeigned happiness upon "holy Gonzalo." No other man in all Shakespeare is ever called "holy," unless an anointed king or a consecrated priest.

Holy Gonzalo, honourable man,  
Mine eyes, even sociable to the show of thine,  
Fall fellowly drops. . . .

O good Gonzalo,  
My true preserver, and a loyal sir  
To him thou follow'st ! I will pay thy graces  
Home both in word and deed.

When the spell is off the circle, he addresses them one by one, beginning with Gonzalo :

First, noble friend,  
Let me embrace thine age, whose honour cannot  
Be measured or confined.

Who can this be among the statesmen and courtiers of Elizabeth and James ? Let the reader do as the writer did : let him run over all the prominent names, turning the leaves of the second and third volumes of Lodge's *Portraits*, and following up others which are not there. There is none so fit as Fulke Greville. He served Elizabeth at Court for twenty-five years, and continued his service under James, never a favourite, but never in disgrace. Camden wrote of him : "He did so entirely devote himself to the study of real Virtue and Honour, that the nobleness of his mind far exceeded that of his birth." He never married, but, according to Anthony Wood, "he lived and died a constant courtier of the ladies." He was the squire of Beauchamp Court and lord of the manor of Aulcester, near Stratford-on-Avon, in which town he was seen often on the business of his estate. He would naturally have felt some pride in the Warwickshire genius who had made a name for himself in London, all the more that poetry and philosophy

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

were his own foibles. His town house as late as the year 1607 was in the Austin Friars. In the latter part of the reign of James he built for himself a mansion in Holborn, nearly opposite to Staple Inn, which became Brooke House when he was created Lord Brooke; the site of it is commemorated by Brooke Street and Greville Street, with Beauchamp Street, which bound the Prudential Assurance Office. James made him custodian of Warwick Castle, which passed into his possession, and continues the residence of his collateral descendants.

Supposing Fulke Greville to have been the original of Gonzalo, the true friend and preserver of Prospero, it is remarkable that there is hardly a trace remaining of his services to Shakespeare. There is only one such, which has not been noticed hitherto, and may be denied by the sticklers for documentary proof. It is in the matter of Shakespeare's famous coat-of-arms, which now blazons the covers and fly-leaves of new editions. Application for a grant of coat-armour was made first to the Heralds' College in 1596. A draft of the grant, addressed "to all and singul noble and gentillmen of what estate or degré bearing arms these presentes shall come," was made out by William Dethick, *alias* Garter, principal King-of-Arms, on 20th October 1596; but the draft was not executed. In 1599 a new draft was written out, without date, which is in the name of William Dethick, Garter, Principall King-of-Arms of England, and *William Camden alias Clarencieulx, King-of-Arms for the sowth east and weste partes of this realme*. This application appears to have been successful, the arms having been assumed. At the second attempt the matter lay with Camden. He had been appointed Clarencieux in 1597; and it is known that he got the office through the influence of Fulke Greville, who would doubtless have been willing also to use his influence with his nominee, and his authority as a Warwickshire squire, to cover over

## THE TREASURER OF THE NAVY

the undoubted defects in Shakespeare's pedigree of gentility. The coat-of-arms was a consolation prize to Shakespeare for his recent loss of the poet-laureateship, which would have made him a gentleman by virtue of the office.

Turning now to 'The Tempest,' we find Gonzalo the chief talker, and the chief subject of talk, in the first scene with the princes and lords after they had come ashore from the wreck. Gonzalo's reiterated theme (which Ariel had already brought to the notice of Prospero) is the marvellous escape of their clothes from the stain of salt water :

*Gonzalo.* That our garments, being, as they were, drenched in the sea, hold notwithstanding their freshness and glosses, being rather new-dyed than stained with salt water.

*Antonio.* If but one of his pockets could speak, would it not say he lies ?

*Sebastian.* Ay, or very falsely pocket up his report.

Antonio and Sebastian exchange these remarks in an aside as if not heeding Gonzalo. When the interruption is over, Gonzalo repeats the curious fact about their garments ; whereupon more discursive talk, and then Gonzalo's third attempt, "Sir, we were talking that our garments," etc. The insinuation of Antonio, that one of Gonzalo's pockets would give the lie to this reiterated statement if it could speak, has some covert meaning, first because of "pockets," and secondly because of *one* of his pockets. Fulke Greville was Treasurer of the Navy ; he had been also Secretary to the Council of the Marches of Wales, in which office he had certain fixed perquisites for himself (Cal. State Papers). He had, as it were, two pockets ; and Antonio insinuates that one of them was stained with salt water, or that his pocket as treasurer of marine causes was not clean. The insinuation is in keeping with Antonio's character throughout, which is that of a man who does not believe in human

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goodness.<sup>1</sup> Sebastian's rejoinder, "Ay, or very falsely pocket up his report," may be the plea of Lord Essex, that important depositions by the witnesses to his conspiracy (of whom Fulke Greville was one) were pocketed up at the State Trial, so to enable Coke and Bacon to prove a long-premeditated conspiracy. Antonio, as Southampton, might be expected to know something of the naval treasurer's pocket, for he was a vice-admiral, and was sometimes out of pocket in considerable sums disbursed by him for the upkeep of forts, etc., under his command in the Channel (State Papers).

### FRANCISCO, SIR FRANCIS BACON

The two other lords are Francisco and Adrian. Francisco speaks just twice—the second time to say three words, the first time to describe in stately verse how he saw Ferdinand battling with the waves, and to express his belief that he had escaped drowning. This question of the survivorship of the heir to Naples is a matter of the first importance to Antonio, when he seeks to persuade Sebastian to murder his brother and seize the crown. Accordingly he discredits Francisco's professed belief, assigning his reasons :

*Ant.* Although this lord of weak remembrance, this  
Who shall be of as little memory  
When he is earth'd, hath here almost persuaded—  
For he's a spirit of persuasion, only  
Professes to persuade—the king his son's alive,  
'Tis as impossible that he's undrown'd  
As he that sleeps here swims.

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<sup>1</sup> Greville did not escape charges of peculation. In the *Sidney Letters* (ed. Collins, 1746) it is stated under date 13th December 1595 : "There is a complaint come to the Lords against Mr. Foulk Grivell for some abuses in Kanck Wood, and an information of £14,000 spoil, by good certificate of gentlemen dwelling thereabouts. It will grow hardly with him. The matter is referred to my Lord Treasurer and Sir John Fortescue." This appears to have been some matter of felling timber on Crown lands in Warwickshire. On 24th June 1597 he was granted the rangership of Wedgknock Park, Co. Warwick, with certain fees or dues which are stated.

## AN HISTORICAL PHRASE

*Sec.* I have no hope  
That he's undrown'd.  
*Avt.* O, out of that "no hope,"  
What great hope have you! no hope that way is  
Another way so high a hope, that even  
Ambition cannot pierce a wink beyond, etc.

Antonio's "Out of that 'no hope'" is a historical phrase. On the afternoon of Sunday, the 8th of February 1601, there were important doings at Essex House, in the Strand. In the morning, about eight o'clock, the Queen had sent the Lord Keeper Egerton, the Lord Chief Justice Popham, the Earl of Worcester, and Sir William Knollys, Comptroller of the Household (who was uncle to Essex), to demand an explanation from his lordship of the assembling of his followers and other mysterious preparations. The deputation, bearing the Great Seal, were made prisoners in Essex House by the bold advice of one or more of the conspirators. Meanwhile, Essex rode into the City, in the hope of rallying the citizens around him, wherein he failed absolutely. He returned by water to his house, which was then put in a state of defence. Towards dusk, about six o'clock, a body of troops under the Lord Admiral, with Sir Robert Sidney, Fulke Greville, and others as captains, effected a landing from the river in the garden of Essex House. They approached the walls and summoned a parley by beat of drum. The Lord Admiral put forward Sidney as spokesman on their side, while Lord Southampton came out upon the leads to answer for the Essex faction. The parley which followed became famous, having been reproduced verbatim, as if reporters had been present. Two extant versions of it agree as to the substance and order of the speeches, differing only a little in the words. One of these was printed from a MS. in the hand of Frances Bourchier, in the possession of Sir Bourchier Wrey, by Lingard in an appendix to vol vi. of his *History*, where it may be read conveniently.

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The other, which alone contains the "no hope" sentence, is a manuscript in handwriting of the time, extending to eight closely-written folio pages, and entitled "The Earle of Essex his rebellion, with the speache of him and of the Earle of South. upon the leads before they yealded themselves, and the speaches of the Lo. Keeper and Mr. Secretarie in the Star Chamber touching ye same." This manuscript was acquired for the Egerton Collection (2606) of the British Museum at the Ouvry sale in 1882. A careless or not very exact modern copy of the same version, formerly in the possession of Joseph Hunter, and now in the Museum, is described as having been made "from a contemporary Manuscript in the collection of Mr. Wilson." Near the top of the second folio recto (in the original MS.) we come to that part of the parley which is of greatest interest: "SYDNEY. By standing out there is noe hope, but by yealdinge there is some hope afforded you. SOUTH. Well, cosen, that hope is soe little that without hostages wee will rather make choice of this noe hope then of that hope. And at these words came the E. of Essex to South. and said to Sir Robt. and the people: Good brother Sydney and you my lovinge countrymen," etc., protesting that his enemies at Court were the sole object of his stand, complaining of their secret methods, and declaring that his purpose was the "rooting out of such atheists and caterpillers from the earth"—meaning Raleigh and his adherents. Southampton's phrase "rather this noe hope than that hope" was epigrammatic enough to be in all men's mouths in the exciting days following, the more so that it would have recalled a famous line of Virgil :

Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem.

It reappears in the mouth of Antonio in 'The Tempest,' "O, out of that 'no hope,' what great hope have you"; and upon that singular coincidence alone

## SIR FRANCIS BACON

one is led to suspect that Antonio is meant for Lord Southampton.

But to return to Francisco as Francis Bacon. Essex and Southampton were both tried before their peers on a charge of treason. Coke, the Attorney-General, led the case for the Crown ; but Bacon, although not then one of the law officers, was also retained for it (he said by the Queen's command) and handsomely feed. His appearance against Essex, his old benefactor and confidant, together with his pressing of the charge, was resented by public opinion so strongly that he found it necessary to justify himself, which he did in 1604 by an open letter to Lord Mountjoy, an old friend to Essex, and now married to his sister, Lady Rich. This *Apologie* contains many matters of interest concerning Bacon's intimacy with Essex, as well as the duties or commands that the Queen laid upon him. He recalls how Essex used to receive his advice about the Irish campaign. Having stated the pros and contras, he would deliver some kind of opinion, whereupon Essex "would tell me, *That opinion came not from my mind but from my robe.*" What is this but Francisco's character ?

For he's a spirit of persuasion, only  
Professes to persuade,—

a characteristic which pertains nowhere to Francisco in the play, and must have been true of the original public personage for whom he stood. Again, he is called "this lord of weak remembrance," although there is nothing in the play to base that trait upon. To explain it, the commentators assume that he was old and in his dotage ; but there is no hint of that, while "weak remembrance" is meant rather as a constitutional peculiarity than as a common infirmity. It was a well-known failing of Francis Bacon, which was never more dramatically placed before the world than at the trial of Essex by his peers. Bacon having

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pressed the case against Lord Essex by a garbled statement, the accused, on recovering from the shock to his generous mind inflicted by the cool effrontery of this lawyer but lately his friend and confidant, hotly challenged him to put off his gown and submit to examination as a witness to fact. Bacon's *Apologie* three years after did not show any better memory for facts. As it was printed, it could be scanned by Essex's troops of friends, so that we may assume the judgment passed upon it at the time to have been the same in effect that has been pronounced by Dr. E. A. Abbot in his valuable monograph *Bacon and Essex*, 1877. Bacon is convicted out of his own extant letters to have advised Essex to undertake the command in Ireland (which was his ruin) by certain arguments and precedents, which he turned so ingeniously in his *Apologie* that they are made to appear dissuasives. As Dr. Abbot is scrupulously fair, I cite his explanation of this moral phenomenon : it will be seen that he puts it down to something like "weak remembrance." "The fact was, that Bacon was one of the most inaccurate of men. 'De minimis non curat lex,' said King James of him ; and the saying is true alike of his philosophical and his political works. Partly through this habitual inaccuracy and partly through a strong sense of the effective way of putting things, Bacon appears to me more often to have unconsciously erred than consciously, in colouring facts to suit his purpose. He had an instinctive bias towards convenient statements, and an unconscious antipathy for inconvenient truth" (p. 182, *note*). A more damaging charge could not be brought in blander terms. It leads directly, as if Dr. Abbot were actually commenting upon this passage in 'The Tempest,' to Shakespeare's own prophecy concerning the oblivion that would overtake Francisco's memory :

This lord of weak remembrance, this  
Who shall be of as little memory  
When he is earth'd.

## SHAKESPEARE ON BACON

This is spoken by Antonio of Francisco ; but there is no reason in the play why Antonio should prophesy a merited oblivion to Francisco, who is the lord in attendance upon himself, nor any reason in the play why Francisco's memory should or should not "outlive his life half a year." The remark falls entirely outside the action and characterisation ; it has a meaning for the author alone, and it is his personal judgment upon the fame of Francis Bacon. It arises out of the word-play of memory in two senses, the train of thought being that a man whose own memory is short ought not to live long in the memories of others. But an easy memory in this case meant an easy conscience, so that the prophecy of oblivion is rather a righteous judgment upon conduct (in the manner of the Psalter) than a critical judgment upon intellectual achievements. Shakespeare in 1611 was not in a position to pronounce upon the latter, as the philosophical writings upon which Bacon's fame rests were all written after that date, excepting the essay on the *Advancement of Learning* (1605). It is therefore beside the question to consider farther why his prophecy seems to be so wide of the mark. The second time that Francisco opens his mouth it is to say just three words, which pass as commonplace, calling for no remark from any commentator. In Act III. Scene iii.—

Enter Prospero above, invisible. Enter several strange Shapes, bringing in a banquet ; they dance about it with gentle actions of salutation ; and, inviting the king, etc., to eat, they depart.

Such is the original stage direction, to which some clever device had corresponded. The three princes are lost in admiration of the "living drollerie," and all pass remarks upon it ; Gonzalo also pays the Shapes a fine tribute. Francisco has been observing them in silence, and at their departure he is constrained to exclaim : "They vanished strangely." By which admission drawn from Francisco Shakespeare meant Sir Francis

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to express admiration, if not envy, of his stage devices. Bacon was not only, as all the world knows, a warm admirer of the mechanical arts and a great believer in their future, but he was also an amateur of masques and devices, and sometimes took a hand in getting them up. A curious question arises about one of these, performed before the Queen in the tiltyard at Whitehall on 17th November 1595, whether, namely, Bacon and Shakespeare were not both consulted by Lord Essex in the preparation of it. The account given in the *Sidney Letters*, 22nd November, shows that the parts actually spoken corresponded with the speeches which are extant in Bacon's handwriting. But there is another part of the same *Philautia* device, of a more picturesque and poetic quality, preserved among the Essex papers in the handwriting of his lordship's secretary, Edward Reynolds. It was intended that the Squire should present to the goddess *Philautia* two Indians from the Amazon—the blind son of an Indian prince and his attendant. The attendant makes a speech full of conceits about the blindness of love, and bringing in, among other things, the same idea as in 'Troilus and Cressida' (also found in *Willowbie his Avisa*) :

For to be wise, and love  
Exceeds man's might ; that dwells with gods above ;

—the words in the speech being : "And, to conclude, your Majesty may be invested of that which the poet saith was never granted, *Amare et sapere.*" All this may have been Essex's own (the whole *Philautia* device passed as his, including Bacon's speeches) ; but the Indian part contains a remarkable sonnet, the oracle spoken from one of "the holiest vaults" of a temple in the Indies, whither the father of the blind prince had gone in search of a cure for his son :

Seated between the old world and the new,  
A land there is no other land may touch,  
Where reigns a Queen in peace and honour true :  
Stories or fables do describe no such.

## BACON THE AUTHOR OF A DEVICE

Never did Atlas such a burthen bear  
As she in holding up the world oppress'd,  
Supplying with her virtue everywhere  
Weakness of friends, errors of servants, best.  
No nation breeds a warmer blood for war,  
And yet she calms them with her majesty.  
No age hath ever wit refined so far,  
And yet she calms them by her policy.  
To her thy son must make his sacrifice,  
If he will have the morning of his eyes.

In obedience to this oracle the blind prince and his conductor had arrived at the Court of the English queen, and the miracle of his restoration to sight was there and then to be performed. It is impossible to be sure that Essex had got some one to write that sonnet for him, with the poetic action in which it is set ; but it is a curious coincidence that in ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ there is ascribed to Rosaline just the converse of the effect, “the morning of his eyes,” upon another “rude and savage man of Inde” :

Who sees the heavenly Rosaline,  
That, like a rude and savage man of Inde,  
At the first opening of the gorgeous east,  
Bows not his vassal head, and stricken blind  
Kisses the base ground with obedient breast ?

Let us indulge the fancy, at least, that on one occasion, in the year 1595, Shakespeare and Bacon severally sent in suggestions for Essex’s device before the Queen, and that Bacon’s alone were used. The Queen did not care for the device ; after listening to part of it, she remarked, “If she had thought there had been so much said of her she would not have been there that night, and so went to bed ” (Sidney Letters).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Spedding calls the part of the Essex device among the State Papers “a device which has no apparent connection with the other.” But both are obviously parts of the same Philautia scheme, although by different hands : the same esquire who spoke what Bacon wrote for him (as in the MS. at Lambeth) was meant also to have introduced the blind Indian and his guide, whose speech, with the sonnet embedded in it, is quite different in manner from those of the hermit, the secretary, the soldier, and the esquire. The earlier part of the device having occupied so much time, it is probable

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### ADRIAN, SIR WILLIAM KNOLLYS

The other of the three lords in the play is Adrian. He is characterised by dialogues at much greater length than Francisco, and by dialogues which seem to have no other object than to characterise him ; and yet his identity is more difficult than Francisco's, and much more difficult than Gonzalo's. It seems as if Shakespeare were not unwilling to make it known that Gonzalo, an honest old counsellor, an honourable man, a loyal sir, the one layman in all his plays who is distinguished as "holy," was meant for Fulke Greville ; that he was at no pains to conceal the identity of Francisco with Sir Francis Bacon ; but that he used all his wit to characterise Adrian and yet to make it difficult to guess who he was. He is in attendance upon Prince Sebastian, who, we shall see, is the deceased Lord Essex. There are three conversations in which he is given a prominent part. In the first, Antonio, who is Southampton (known for his addiction to wagering upon tennis-matches and the like), lays a wager aside with Sebastian as to whether Gonzalo or Adrian "first begins to crow." Sebastian backs "the old cock," Antonio "the cockerel," the wager being "a laughter." It happens that Adrian is the first to break silence, whereupon Sebastian laughs ("let him laugh that wins"), and Antonio, having lost, smartly exclaims, "So : you're paid," that is, paid by your own inadvertent laughter. The text of the folio is quite clear, and is careful even to the punctuation. But the editors, knowing that Gonzalo is described as "an honest old counsellor," and assuming that he is "the old cock," have felt constrained to amend it, some in one way, some in another, so as to make Antonio the winner of the wager. It is impossible to make Antonio that the Indian part was omitted, although it is the more poetical and would have been less tedious. The compliment to Elizabeth in the sonnet has the merit of being true, and would have been well received.

## SIR WILLIAM KNOLLYS

the winner without taking a series of liberties with the text. The meaning, and indeed the very purpose, of the incident is to bring out the fact that, although Gonzalo is old, Adrian is older ; Gonzalo being indeed a mere chicken to him. Adrian is “the old cock,” although neither the reader would suspect it nor those who saw Adrian in the flesh. He was an old man who looked young for his years ; he was also of “suppler joints” than Gonzalo (III. iii. 109), suppler in more senses than one ; he was an old courtier, in good preservation, who had kept his place under as many trials as the vicar of Bray. He is also pedantic in his language and vain of his knowledge. Thus, on landing from the wreck :

*Adr.* Although this island seem to be desert, uninhabitable and almost inaccessible, it must needs be of subtle, tender and delicate temperance.

*Ant.* Temperance was a delicate wench.

*Seb.* Ay, and a subtle, as he most learnedly delivered.

*Adr.* The air breathes upon us here most sweetly.

*Seb.* As if it had lungs, and rotten ones.

*Ant.* Or as 'twere perfumed by a fen.

The caustic “asides” of the two princes have a meaning which is less material to Prospero’s isle than to Adrian himself. His complacency comes out in another dialogue, arising out of their recent visit to Tunis to marry Alonso’s daughter to the king of that country.

*Adr.* Tunis was never graced before with such a paragon to their queen.

*Gon.* Not since widow Dido’s time.

*Ant.* Widow ! a pox o’ that ! How came that widow in ? widow Dido !

*Seb.* What if he had said “widower Æneas” too ? Good Lord, how you take it !

Then comes the hit at Adrian’s slowness of wit :

*Adr.* “Widow Dido” said you ? You make me study of that : she was of Carthage, not of Tunis.

*Gon.* This Tunis, sir, was Carthage.

*Adr.* Carthage ?

*Gon.* I assure you, Carthage.

## REAL PERSONAGES OF ‘THE TEMPEST’

The old cock, of slow wit, formal style, supple knees, subtle, tender, delicate, and temperate, was Sir William Knollys, Comptroller and subsequently Treasurer of the Household under Elizabeth, and now Master of the Wards under James, with the rank of Baron Knollys and Viscount Wallingford. His engraved portrait, taken two or three years after the date of ‘The Tempest,’ when he was about seventy, shows him to be a fresh-looking man, without a wrinkle on his face, and erect of figure. He lived to the age of eighty-nine, and was so agile in his old age that he rode out on horseback to within a few months of his death. He was some eleven years older than Fulke Greville, but would have looked no older at sixty-eight than the latter did at fifty-seven, an age at which most men were “old” in those days. Hence the joke of the old cock and the cockerel.

At the date of ‘The Tempest,’ Knollys was not one of Shakespeare-Prospéro’s “enemies”; he had settled scores with him long ago in the parts of Polonius (Chap. XIV.) and Malvolio, and had shown mercy to him in the part of Angelo (Chap. XIII.); and he now brings on “the old cock” merely for a little mild fun. Knollys was the uncle of Essex, and had a very delicate part to play in his nephew’s conspiracy. I have no doubt (in a subjective matter, of course) as to the identity of Adrian, which I arrived at in the first instance through his name. Shakespeare uses the name of Adrian in only one other place, in a scene of ‘Coriolanus,’ where it is given, in the text, to a Volscian who is met and recognised by a Roman on the road between Rome and Antium. The suggestion of it for ‘The Tempest’ seems to have come to him when he was using Harington’s translation of the *Orlando Furioso*, from which he took numerous hints. In Canto xxix., in which “called it a good and blessed storm” is paralleled by Prospero’s phrase “*blessedly holp hither,*” there occurs at strophe 35 a reference

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to Hadrian's fortress on the Tiber, opposite to which Harington has printed on the margin “*Moles Adriani*, now called castle of S. Angelo.” This is one of the things which the “eye doth catch,” as Shakespeare's often did in turning the leaves of a book ; it suggests to him that Adrian will be the name in his new play for the man who was called Angelo on the last occasion of using him, in ‘Measure for Measure.’ All the names of the princes and lords but this one are found in a book from which the name of the Patagonian god Setebos is also taken (Eden's *History of Travaile*, 1577).

### THE PLOT OF ANTONIO AND SEBASTIAN, SOUTHAMPTON AND ESSEX

The identification of Sebastian and Antonio with Lords Essex and Southampton, and of the abortive conspiracy in the play with the attempted revolution of 8th February 1601, of which these lords were the leaders, is one of the most valuable revelations of ‘The Tempest’—valuable even in a historical respect as showing how Shakespeare viewed Southampton's share in the plot. The identification turns upon a convergence of probabilities, some of which are general, others particular. In the first place, the plot in ‘The Tempest’ is an academic affair, which does not bear upon the fortunes of Prospero, but is introduced with the object mainly of exhibiting the character of Antonio, who is Prospero's arch-enemy. Secondly, the general circumstances of the conspiracy are as nearly those of the actual historical plot as they could be made, *mutatis mutandis*. The minor point both in the real plot and in the romantic was the natural succession to the crown.

In the play it is necessary to separate Ferdinand, the king's son, from the other princes and lords for two reasons : first, that the wooing of Miranda might take place ; and secondly, that he should be supposed drowned by his father as well as by the conspirators.

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The separation of Ferdinand is indeed the step in the action upon which the whole sequel depends.<sup>1</sup> His supposed death brings out the best side of his father's character ; Alonso's sorrow is so marked that Dr. Garnett takes it to be meant for the sorrow of King James at the death of Prince Henry in 1613, and to be the determining fact for dating the play. In the present hypothesis, it is the natural regret of Lord Pembroke that he had no heir begotten of his body, a theme which was common ground between him and Shakespeare from the time of the Sonnets. The supposed drowning of Ferdinand is also turned to account to introduce the conspiracy. In the actual conspiracy of Essex, the succession to the English crown was always in the background. Essex and his friends were in correspondence with James VI., to whose succession they looked for the redress of their grievances. On the other hand, both Essex and Southampton believed that their enemies at Court, including Raleigh and Cobham, who were afterwards convicted in the attempt to place the Lady Arabella Stuart on the throne, and including, as they wrongly supposed, Sir Robert Cecil, were in favour of the claims of the Spanish Infanta. In the play the situation is necessarily different in details. Claribel, the next heir after Ferdinand, had been

<sup>1</sup> It is a point of some value for the disputed question of the prior date of the ballad, "The Enchanted Island," that it does not separate the young prince from his father. The ballad passed through the hands of J. Payne Collier, and is found in spurious company. But it is not at all clear that it is itself spurious, or that it was constructed at an early date out of the materials of 'The Tempest.' Francis Douce was certainly right in his appreciation of its style : "One of the most beautiful ballads I have ever read." Collier says that it bore at the end the word and initials, "Finis. R. G."—perhaps Robert Greene. The exiled king is of Arragon, and his daughter's name, Ida, one of Greene's names in *James IV.* The rhythm is the musical stave of Wordsworth's "Ruth," which is found in early English ballads (see Guest, *English Rhythms*, 2nd ed. 1882, p. 590), and was used by Drayton for a madrigal in his 8th Eclogue (1593). Greene had great facility in the use of rhythms. If it was he who wrote the ballad, and gave Shakespeare hints for his plot, we should be able to understand the enigmatic talk in Act II., Scene i., about the ground of the island being "tawny, with an eye of green in it."

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married to the prince of Tunis, so that the whole company of princes, lords, and others might be on board a ship returning from the wedding, and be wrecked on Prospero's isle, which is one of the Mediterranean islands in *Orlando Furioso*. But the dialogue upon Claribel's place in the succession, obscure as it is in general, appears from some passages to have been composed to suit the English case. Elizabeth was besought by one minister after another to declare the succession, but would give no sign until she was on her deathbed, when she seemed to assent to James by raising her hand at the mention of his name. In the play, the king is reminded by Sebastian (Essex) that he had been "kneeled to and importuned otherwise by all of us," but had proved obstinate. Again Antonio's point, that Tunis was so far off that the crown might be seized before Claribel's succession could be effected, with its enigmatic reference to the sun being post and the "Man in the Moon too slow," is either meant for some actual case or it has no meaning at all.

But the question of the succession is of minor importance in the parable. It is the immediate occasion and circumstances of the conspiracy between Antonio and Sebastian, that correspond closely with the conspiracy of Essex, Southampton, and others in 1601. Before anything is said of a plot in the play, Gonzalo turns the conversation so as to bring out the discontent of Antonio and Sebastian :

You are gentlemen of brave mettle: you would lift the Moon out of her sphere if she would continue five weeks without changing.

*Seb.* We would so, and then go a bat-fowling.

Bat-fowling was the sport of knocking down birds by torch-light; and the meaning here is clearly that of Webster, in an earlier play : "bat-fowling for offices . . . i' the dark." This short dialogue sums up the situation of Essex and other malcontents most tersely.

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In Bacon's counsels to Essex, he used to draw a distinction, in his dry, legal manner, between the service of "a declining prince" and of a prince newly come to the throne. Elizabeth was most emphatically a declining prince; she had reigned too long: she was the Moon in her fifth week. Not only the business of State, but also business in ordinary, was stagnant under the Queen's advancing years and increasing obstinacy and parsimony. Thomas Dekker, although not the man to cite for serious history, was doubtless correct in his picture of the outburst of new life on the accession of James: "Trades that lay dead and rotten started out of their trance. . . . There was mirth in every one's face, the streets were filled with gallants, tobacconists filled up whole taverns, vintners hung out spick-and-span new ivy-bushes (because they wanted good wine), and their old rain-beaten lattices marched under other colours, having lost both company and colour before."

Essex had also a particular reason to "lift the Moon out of her sphere." Under the Tudor sovereigns the public service was not organised as it is now. The cost of foreign embassies and military expeditions fell in part upon the nobles who undertook them, on the understanding that they would be recouped by grants of monopolies and the like. As the Queen advanced in years she became more "humourous" and "cankered": Essex is reported by Raleigh to have said that "her mind grew as crooked as her carcase." His own monopoly of the sweet wines, which had been granted him by way of return for his large outlays in the service of the State, had expired in 1600, and had not been renewed, so that he was in difficulties. Southampton had no hope of English employment while the Queen lived. The Court was full of suitors discontented by their pay being in arrears, or by the delay of expected grants and patents; so that there were many ready to repair to the cave of Adullam. In the phrase of 'The Tempest' it was "foul weather," a phrase

## LORD ESSEX

which is used with a political meaning in a letter to Southampton from his friend Lord Henry Howard in April 1599 (Cal. Cecil MSS. ix. 125).

## SEBASTIAN, LORD ESSEX

Such being the general correspondence of the political situation in the play with the actual discontent in the last years of Elizabeth, one may look with confidence for particular marks of identity between the scenic and the real malcontents. The chief of those proofs, Antonio's use of Southampton's very phrase, "Out of that 'no hope,' what great hope have we!" has been stated already (p. 91). Not less clear are the marks of identity between Sebastian and Essex, of which four may be given in the order in which they occur.

(1) On board the stranded ship, while the mariners are calling out "All lost! to prayers, to prayers!" Sebastian makes a strange remark, "I'm out of patience," implying that he was unable to bear the suspense of a moment of peril. What is this but Essex's "last fatal impatience," as Bacon called, and most men considered, his desperate attempt? The sentiment is equally true of Essex in respect of his impatience to be put out of life after his arrest.

(2) Next to his impatience, we may take his brusqueness with Elizabeth. It was one of his favourite phrases, preserved by Bacon in the *Apologie* of 1604, that "he desired to do the Queen good against her will," so that he was blunt and contentious with her to a degree that probably no other courtier was. In the play, Sebastian makes a brusque speech to the king, accusing him of being the cause of their shipwreck, and ending with, "The fault's your own." Gonzalo remonstrates with him.

Gon.                            My lord Sebastian,  
The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness,  
And time to speak it in : you rub the sore  
When you should bring the plaster.

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

*Seb.*

Very well.

*Ant.* And most chirurgeonly.

Sebastian assents to the charge of rubbing the sore, and Antonio declares it to have been good surgery ; which is as near as possible to Essex's protestation that " he desired to do the Queen good against her will."

(3) One of Essex's characteristics was irresolution, scruples, misgivings, readiness to give up at a check, so that he would retire for a time from the Court to his estates as if in petulance. So marked was this trait that he is often supposed to have been the original of Hamlet in respect of irresolution. In the play, Antonio upbraids Essex with apathy :

*Ant.* Noble Sebastian,

Thou let'st thy fortune sleep. . . .

*Seb.* Well, I am standing water.

*Ant.* I'll teach you how to flow.

*Seb.* Do so : to ebb

Hereditary sloth instructs me.

And, when it comes to action in the plot which follows, Sebastian hesitates at the critical moment :

*Ant.* Draw together :

And when I rear my hand, do you the like,  
To fall it on Gonzalo.

*Seb.* O, but one word [*They talk apart*,—

and while they are talking the threatened men are aroused by Ariel singing in Gonzalo's ear.

(4) Essex was peculiarly subject to religious remorse. He told his chaplain before his death that even in the field his sins would rise up before him and make him a coward. His death-bed repentance was so extreme as to suggest that his mind was unhinged. Sebastian's remorseful conscience is mentioned twice. Prospero upbraids him gently with having abetted or assented to his expulsion from Milan, and adds, " Thou art pinch'd for't now, Sebastian." The plot against the King of Naples was originally Antonio's,

## LORD SOUTHAMPTON

with Sebastian,  
Whose inward pinches therefore are most strong,—

nothing being said of Antonio's pinches, who was untroubled by conscience.

These four traits are not only highly characteristic of Essex, but they are recalled with an absence of all harshness, as if out of tenderness to the memory of one dead.

## ANTONIO, LORD SOUTHAMPTON

The character of Antonio is displayed at greater length than that of Sebastian, leaving the impression of a man hard, clever, conscienceless, cynical, as well as ambitious and unscrupulous. He disclaims conscience in set terms : “I feel not this deity in my bosom.” He insinuates that honest old Gonzalo is capable of peculation, and that Adrian and Francisco will “take suggestion as a cat laps milk,” while his last speech is to describe Caliban as “a plain fish, and no doubt marketable.” The identity of Antonio with Lord Southampton is not proved by his character only, which is not so distinctive of any one statesman as that of Sebastian is, but rather by his part in the academic conspiracy within the play, and by his relations with Sebastian therein. The character of Antonio is, at all events, not unsuited to Lord Southampton. He appears to have been a cynic from his youth up ; for his college essay, written in Latin at the age of thirteen, at the end of his first year at St. John’s College, Cambridge, was upon the theme : “*Omnes ad studium virtutis incitantur spe premii*”—All are incited to the cultivation of virtue by the hope of reward. It was sent to Lord Burghley, his guardian as Master of the Wards, and is endorsed, “22nd July 1586” (Cal. Hatfield MSS. iii. 151). Of his cleverness there is no question. He soon made his mark at Court, being conspicuous by his fine person, high spirit, and wit. The Queen, however, appears to

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

have shown him little favour. On 1st February 1598 one of the Sidney letters records : "He is much troubled at her Majesty's straungest usage of him." Later in the same year the Queen directed Sir Robert Cecil to tell him that his conduct had been "very contemptuous," probably to herself, as it was certainly heartless or callous to his newly wedded wife (see Chapter IX.). After the accession of James he became a powerful noble ; but he held no other office to the end of his life than that of Vice-Admiral. Many eulogies were written upon him before and after his death, which have been collected by Malone in his great Shakespearian work ; they are, however, so pointless, if not insincere, that they add nothing to what we know of his character incidentally.

In 'The Tempest' Antonio is prominent in two events : first in the ousting of Prospero from his dukedom of Milan, which is related at great length by the exile himself to Miranda at the opening of the play ; and secondly, in the abortive plot against the King of Naples, which passes in the action of the play itself. Sebastian reminds him that the latter enterprise is akin to the former :

Thy case, dear friend,  
Shall be my precedent ; as thou got'st Milan  
I'll come by Naples.

It will be convenient to take first Antonio's share in the plot within the play, as expressing Shakespeare's view of Southampton's part in the Essex conspiracy.

The conspiracy against the King of Naples is brought into 'The Tempest' for some other purpose than to influence the main action : it is altogether outside the affairs of Prospero, and comes to an end in failure after it has served its purpose. Its purpose is, to exhibit Antonio as the evil genius of Sebastian. He whispers the treason into his ear, dangles the crown before his eyes, and prescribes to him what he is to do both at

## SOUTHAMPTON'S POLITICS

the first attempt and in anticipation of the second. Throughout the dialogue their political sentiments are on the whole similar ; usually Sebastian speaks first, Antonio capping his remark with something stronger, more incisive, or more cynical. This is not at all the historical view of Southampton's part in the political movement which resulted in the fiasco of 8th February 1601. Essex and Southampton were tried together and on the same charges before their peers, and both were condemned to death. The counsel for the Crown were the Attorney- and Solicitor-General and Bacon. It was the latter who pressed the case most strongly, on the ground of motive and long premeditation ; and this was done wholly as against Essex, who was, of course, the protagonist by reason of his eminence in the State and his former close relations with the Queen. But it will appear from Bacon's *Declaration touching the Treasons of the late Earl of Essex and his Complices* (which was his own compilation, although he sought afterwards to shelter himself behind the Queen's command, instructions, and revision) that he aimed at magnifying the treason of Essex by extenuating that of the accomplices. This is specially notable in the case of Southampton. He is introduced late in Bacon's narrative, after Candlemas 1601 : "There met at this council [in Drury House] the Earl of Southampton, with whom in former times he [Essex] had been at some emulations and differences in Court. But after, Southampton having married his kinswoman, and plunged himself wholly into his fortune, and being his continual associate in Ireland, he accounted of him as most assured unto him, and had long ago in Ireland acquainted him with his purpose, as was declared before. Sir Charles Davers, one exceedingly devoted to the Earl of Southampton, upon affection begun first upon the deserving of the same Earl towards him, when he was in trouble about the murther of one Long," etc. That is to say, Essex gained over Southampton, formerly

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

at variance with him, by family interest, not by the sympathy of their political aims; and Southampton brought with him Sir Charles Davers, his own ally in an equally private way. There is, of course, an element of truth in this cunning sentence, or Bacon would not be Bacon. It is impossible to check the assertion that Essex had been "at some emulations and differences" with Southampton at Court, until the marriage of the latter with Mistress Bess Vernon, to save her reputation, in August 1598. His relations with the maid-of-honour had begun as early as 1595; and meanwhile he had accompanied Essex on the Spanish voyage in 1596 and on the Island voyage in 1597. Essex's most immediate interest in him after the marriage was to extricate him from his gambling follies in Paris, the poor lady being all the while at Essex House awaiting her confinement. It is almost certain that there were "differences," if not "emulations," after the marriage as well as before it, and that they were alike unconnected with political principles. In so far as we can diagnose Southampton's policy, it was that of a malcontent noble, aggrieved at the arbitrary rule of the Tudor sovereigns. (See under 'Richard II.' in Chapter VIII.)

Secondly, Bacon gave a colour to the motive of Essex in appointing Southampton his Lord-General of the Horse for the Irish campaign, by his warrant of 15th April 1599. The nomination to offices under him had been a matter of terms on accepting the command, and he had insisted upon reserving for himself that and other appointments. The Queen disapproved of Southampton very strongly, and demanded his recall in June or July in the midst of the campaign. Essex's rational and generous motives in appointing him would have been, to give him the service which he was desirous of but could never get from the Queen herself, and to have an able and gallant general of the horse. Bacon, however, asserts that his motive was simply and solely to pick a quarrel with the Queen—

## SOUTHAMPTON'S POLITICS

“having placed him, no question, to that end to find cause of discontentment.”

Thirdly, and most important of all, Bacon garbled the evidence of Southampton, with or without his consent, in the very serious matter of Essex's expressed intention to bring two or three thousand of his army in Ireland to Milford Haven and to march upon London, *after* having come to an understanding with Tyrone and the Irish rebels. The other witness to the conversation when this was broached was Sir Christopher Blount, whose signed deposition states that it took place in his own rooms at Dublin Castle a few days *before* the march into Ulster had begun—before Essex had encountered Tyrone at all. Bacon garbled this by omitting the sentence in which Blount fixed the date; so that we should not have known the truth had not the original of his deposition been found among the State Papers. The original of Southampton's signed deposition has never been found; Bacon merely printed (in an Appendix) what purports to be the text of it, without his signature; from which it appears that the meeting in Blount's rooms at Dublin Castle took place “on a day”—as if it were not of capital importance to the guilt or innocence of Essex in the matter of complicity with Tyrone to have the date fixed. It is impossible to prove that Southampton himself omitted the date; the vagueness of the phrase “on a day” appears to be studied, and may have been adopted by the deponent upon suggestion.

Southampton's life was spared by the Queen's prerogative of mercy, and probably by pre-arrangement. In what is called his “confession,” which is not a confession at all but a pathetic appeal for mercy, he declared that he was led into the plot purely by the love he bore to Essex; and that was the line taken by Sir Robert Cecil, namely, “That the poor young Earl, merely for the love of Essex, had been drawn into this action.” His advice on the fatal morning, or, as Essex

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

wrote, "in the confusion they [his accomplices] drew him into even in his own house that morning that he went into the City," was not inquired into. It is known that there were two parties among Essex's followers, one extreme and the other moderate, that nothing was fixed, and that Essex's fatal mistake of attempting to raise the City was a sudden resolution—by whom advised we do not know. Southampton's name escapes mention in all such references to motive and instigation (which include Blount and Davers among those who were executed, as well as Essex's sister, Lady Rich), as if he had really been the "poor young Earl" that Cecil wished the world to think.<sup>1</sup> Essex himself, in his last days, showed his magnanimity by speaking of Southampton in such terms as to help save his life. When Southampton was released from the Tower on the accession of James, in April 1603, one of those to congratulate him was Bacon, in a brief letter of which the principal sentence is: "This great change hath wrought in me no other change towards your lordship than this, that I may safely be now that which I was truly before"—that is to say, he had been his friend in secret during the State Trial. The interest of this revelation is, that in 'The Tempest' Francisco is the lord in attendance upon Antonio. It is true that he could not have been attached to Sebastian, who is Essex, nor to Alonso (Pembroke), inasmuch as Gonzalo (Fulke Greville) was, by his devotion to the memory of Sir Philip Sidney, "a loyal sir to him thou followest"; but there was no need to make Francisco (with pointed reference to Bacon) one of the lords at all; and as there is a certain fitness in Gonzalo following Alonso and in Adrian following Sebastian, it is probable that

<sup>1</sup> Camden, who was present throughout the State Trial, thus summarises Southampton's defence: "Southamptonius mitiori oratione, et imprimis modesta, culpam ex amore in Esseum contractam submisse deprecatus, fidemque in Principem integerrimam protestatus . . . Nec quod consultatum fuit, sed aliud, in actum erupisse, nempe ingressum in Urbem. . . . Se toto die gladium non strinxisse."—*Annales Reg. Eliz.*

## SOUTHAMPTON'S LITERARY AMBITION

Shakespeare meant something in attaching Francisco to Antonio.

More important than Antonio's part in the political plot with Sebastian is his former usurpation of Prospero's dukedom, now some twelve years ago. He is the chief among Prospero's "enemies," the only one of them whom he forgives coldly and formally in the last Act :

For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother  
Would even infect my mouth, I do forgive  
Thy rankest fault ; all of them.

The story of his usurpation is told to Miranda in a long and difficult narrative, which taxed the poor child's dutiful attention to her father. Prospero is curiously at a loss to express himself clearly and simply. If it had been the banished Duke in the forest of Arden, or the King of Navarre with his attendant lords in a country retreat, we should have been put in possession of the facts by a few plain words. The antecedents of the exile in 'The Tempest' are obscure, improbable, mysterious, prolix to tell, and impossible to make coherent. One could understand Robert Browning going deep into the psychology of an Italian political plot, but it is not Shakespeare's usual way. The explanation is, that he has a private and personal story to tell under the guise and in the terminology of political history.

Twelve years before the scene opens, Prospero was Duke of Milan and a prince of power, reputed the prime duke in dignity among the signories, and for the liberal arts without a parallel. Those arts being all his study, he cast the government upon his brother, forgot his state, and became wrapt in secret studies. His brother Antonio, in whom he reposed a confidence sans bound, and loved of all the world next to the little Miranda, entered upon a course of gradual usurpation, which is described by the help of a great variety of metaphor and with strange redundancy. Being

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accustomed to pass as the ruler, and being in effect the regent, Antonio came to believe that he was indeed the duke, and, his ambition growing, he needs will be absolute Milan. Unable to oust Prospero without help, he made terms with Prospero's inveterate enemy, the King of Naples, who, on condition that Milan should lose its independence, sent an army. One midnight fated to the purpose, Antonio opened the gates of Milan, occupied the city with the foreign troops, and hurried off the bookish Prospero and his three-year old daughter to a vessel in readiness, from which they were transhipped, a few leagues out, into the rotten carcase of a butt, and sent adrift at the mercy of the winds and waves.

This is a very strange history of a usurpation. Such things happened not unfrequently in Italian and Spanish states, and were made the subject of plays, for example, by Marston and Greene; but amongst them there is nothing like Prospero's deposition. A prince "for the liberal arts without a parallel" might have been another Lorenzo de Medici, if he had minded his affairs of State. Even when he became wrapt in secret studies, he might have been another Charles V., retiring to a cloister to please himself. Having let things drift until his brother had to rule in his place, he might still have submitted to the inevitable deposition like the Emperor Ferdinand when he retired in semi-state to Prague. But he is surprised at his brother's "lie" in making believe that he was "indeed the duke"; he is indignant that he should have been deposed and exiled; and, most strangely of all, he recalls the love that his people bore him without reflecting that they had made not the slightest show of resistance to the *coup d'état*.

Shakespeare would not have exhibited Duke Prospero in such a coil of paradoxes and improbabilities had not his deposition been a parable of his own loss of the Laurel Crown. So interpreted, the story becomes plain, consistent, probable, although certainly surprising.

## SOUTHAMPTON'S USURPATION

The greatest surprise is that Lord Southampton, whom we know only as his patron, should have been the prime mover in the plot to deprive him of the titular kingship of letters. From the Sonnets we know that Lord Herbert failed him in his promised support for the laureateship, and can guess that he did so at some one's instigation. My own guess was that it was at his mother's, the Countess of Pembroke's instigation, on account of her old favour for Samuel Daniel. No one could have guessed that the person behind the scenes was Southampton, that Shakespeare was kept out of his reward through a set being made against him, and that the inoffensive Daniel's candidature was merely a blind, insomuch that he never got his patent for the office, which was in a kind of commission until within a few months of Shakespeare's death. The details of all this would be a strange revelation if told as matter of fact. I believe that they are told in parable in 'The Tempest,' and that it is not altogether hopeless to reconstruct from the parable the circumstances which had arisen in Southampton's patronage of Shakespeare so as to have made him his enemy just at the time when the question of the laureateship came up.

All that we know for certain of his relations with Lord Southampton is, that he chose him in 1593 to receive the dedication of 'Venus and Adonis,' a "strong prop" to support a weak burden, a noble godfather to the first heir of his invention; and that he addressed him a year after, in the dedication of 'Lucrece,' in words which imply close intimacy, devotion, and perhaps obligation. It is not to be supposed that Shakespeare's instinct was at fault either in the choice of a patron or in making much of him afterwards. His lordship was certainly distinguished among his peers not only by the graces of his person, but also by his intellect. His was the combination of Dumaine:

For he hath wit to make an ill shape good,  
And shape to win grace though he had no wit.

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He appears to have made good use of his time at college, and he may be assumed to have entered on the great world with natural abilities cultivated to the greatest advantage. Although he was nine years younger than Shakespeare, his better education would have brought him, in the year 1593 and at the age of twenty, on a par with the self-educated man of twenty-nine, and given him the superiority in some things. The history of their intimacy is absolutely unknown from external sources ; it can only be matter of speculation. But it is matter of legitimate speculation ; nay more, the problem is forced upon us by various things, for example, by the absence of any mention of Southampton in the dedication of the folio of 1623. The safe ground and warrant of speculation I hold to be the parable of Antonio as the usurping Duke of Milan. Antonio is Prospero's brother and his vicegerent, having the manage of his estate, representing him in the face of the world. But next, "he was the ivy that had hid my princely trunk, and sucked my verdure out." He entertained ambition, expelled remorse (tender feeling) and nature, and set himself to deprive the playwright of the credit and reward of his labours for the stage ! It is this part of the parable that seems so improbable to us after three centuries. It is not so difficult to believe that Shakespeare may have found Lord Southampton's help useful in various ways, and that his lordship may have expected a considerable *quid pro quo*. For there is the tradition that his patron helped him with money. Rowe, the original and judicious biographer of Shakespeare in 1709, thought the story worth repeating because it descended through Davenant, who was Shakespeare's godson and a boy of nine at the poet's death. He gives the amount at a thousand pounds, and the occasion of the gift "to enable him to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to." At Stratford-on-Avon they supposed that the purchase meant was that of New Place, which the

## SOUTHAMPTON'S PATRONAGE

poet acquired in the spring of 1597 by payment of a first fine of sixty pounds. Halliwell-Phillipps, who has gleaned a number of minor details after Malone's first harvest, has found that there was a process entered in the same year to lift the mortgage of forty pounds upon his mother's landed inheritance of Asbies, which probably meant that he had the money ready. Others have supposed that the purchase which he had a mind to was the share, which he certainly held from an unknown date, in the Globe Theatre, originally built in Shoreditch in 1595 and transferred to its more famous location on the Bankside, Southwark, in 1599. Either of those purchases is believed to have been beyond his means about the age of thirty or thirty-two unless he had been helped. But the thousand pounds mentioned in 1709 can hardly have been in the Elizabethan currency, which would have represented about eight thousand present value. Whatever its exact amount, it was probably a handsome gift. The young lord was magnificent and lavish, but it is a mistake to suppose that he was generous and impulsive; on the contrary, his disposition was cynical and cold. Moreover, he was not so rich that he could spare large sums for other purposes than his own costly living and pleasures. In an extant letter from him to Lord Essex, in the autumn of 1598, he explains that he had been in trouble with his creditors before he went abroad at the beginning of that year; yet he found means to gamble deeply at tennis in Paris between those dates, and had lost many thousands of crowns. There is another indication, a small one, that he had been pinched for money about 1596 or 1597. John Florio, the Italian scholar, was one of those patronised by him. His *World of Wordes*, an Italian-English dictionary, which would have been expensive to print and slow to sell, was entered on the Stationers' Register in 1596, with the unusual detail that it was "dedicated to the Earl of Southampton." But the publication was delayed, for some reason, until

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1598 ; and then it was found to be dedicated to two others besides the intended sole patron, namely, the Countess of Bedford and the Earl of Rutland. Supposing that Southampton had found the money to set Shakespeare up as a theatrical proprietor, he may have understood it only as a loan, or as an investment in which he kept an interest ; and it may have turned out eventually to be one of those cases in which "loan oft loses both itself and friend." Shakespeare himself was remarkably careful in his lendings, and was probably a better man of business than his noble patron.

Another way in which Lord Southampton could have helped the playwright was by giving him the run of his library. Shakespeare must have been an omnivorous reader. The fourteen thousand words of his vocabulary were not found among the yeomen of Warwickshire nor extracted from the atmosphere of London playhouses. Several passages in 'The Tempest' make it clear that Prospero was not only a book-lover but absolutely dependent upon books. When he was sent adrift from Milan, the considerate Gonzalo

Of his gentleness,  
Knowing I loved my books, he furnished me  
From mine own library with volumes that  
I prize above my dukedom.

And Caliban, addressing the drunken butler and the jester (Ben Jonson and Marston), says :

Remember  
First to possess his books ; for without them  
He's but a sot, as I am. . . .

Burn but his books.  
He has brave utensils—for so he calls them—  
Which, when he has a house, he'll deck withal.

Every word is meant, and meant of Shakespeare himself.

Of his actual use of Southampton's library about 1596 I shall be able to give instances in Chapter VIII.

## SOUTHAMPTON AS COLLABORATOR

But neither the use of his Elegy nor the gift of a large sum of money can account for Lord Southampton's pretensions before the world to be "inherited the Duke." The parable of Antonio, as the usurper of the duchy of Milan, is related with so much particularity, not without repetition or redundancy, that we may extract from it some hints of the nature of this unique Elegy partnership, and of the grounds upon which Southampton had based his pretensions. From Shakespeare's point of view, these pretensions were baseless; Antonio was guilty of a most wicked "lie," which grew out of an illusion. Thus we hear only one side of the case; and that side of it which we do not hear, although it cannot possibly affect the supremacy of Shakespeare in intellectual power, is yet a matter of peculiar interest, as all questions of collaboration are, and is even a matter of fairness to the inferior party. As we cannot hear Southampton nor any impartial witness, let us take Shakespeare's own data.

The intimacy of Antonio with Prospero was so close that he is figured as a brother, whom of all the world he loved next to his own offspring the child Miranda. He reposed in Antonio "a confidence sans bound," and "put to him the manage of his state." This absolute trust in Antonio is emphasised in three or four places; it is hardly conceivable in a real political situation, in an age and in a country which produced the maxims of Machiavelli. It does not even appear that Prospero was aware of his brother's ambition until his rude awakening "one midnight fated to the purpose," when he was hurried on board a vessel. The unsuspecting duke, rapt in his secret studies, saw nothing of what was passing under his eyes, but saw the whole plot as if in a revelation on looking back. The stages of the usurpation, thus made clear, are then recalled. The beginning is a certain personal influence of Antonio: he was "perfected how to grant suits,

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how to deny them." This is said of the administrative officers of the State, so that, in form, it can be no allegory of the relations between Southampton and Shakespeare. Notwithstanding this formal difficulty, such an allegorical intention may be suspected from the kind of phrases used and the variety of them. Antonio, it appears,

new created

The creatures that were mine, I say, or changed 'em,  
Or else new formed 'em ; having both the key  
Of officer and office, set all hearts i' the state  
To what tune pleased his ear ; that now he was  
The ivy which had hid my princely trunk,  
And suck'd my verdure out on't.

The simple thing for one to do who was conspiring at usurpation was to fill the offices with his creatures. But that was not what Antonio did : he new created the creatures that were Prospero's, or changed them, or else new formed them. In these phrases, carefully chosen and repeated, we have the allegory betrayed. Prospero, the lawful duke, ruling with the love of his people, had no need of "creatures." Supposing that we admit "creatures" in his own duchy, how could a usurper "new create" them? He could, indeed, "change 'em," or he could win them over without dismissing them; but he "new created" them, and, where he did not "change 'em," he "new formed 'em." Again he did so, not that he might rely upon them, but that he might be gratified with "what tune pleased his ear." This is not political work, but literary. Prospero's creatures were Shakespeare's creations for the stage. Southampton, "being perfected how to grant suits, how to deny them," was allowed by the obliged author to "new create" his creatures, or to change them, or else "new form" them, which is the dominant idea of "new create" turning up again. Thus he "set all hearts i' the state to what tune pleased his ear"; he imposed his own taste, gave a colour to the characterisation and the action. I shall show, in

## SOUTHAMPTON AS COLLABORATOR

Chapter VIII., how that can be explained for certain of the plays, most of all for ‘Richard II.’ Having thus been suffered to give effect to his own views, tastes, or fancies, he finds himself in a position to mask the real author—

that now he was  
The ivy which had hid my princely trunk,  
And suck'd my verdure out on't.

The figure of the ivy and the trunk will not seem strange to a generation which has been so taken with the notion that Shakespeare was the ivy which hid the princely trunk of Francis Bacon. The allegory in ‘The Tempest’ reverses the relation ; it is Prospero’s princely trunk which is hid by the ivy of Antonio. Leaving the figure of the ivy and the trunk, we come to an expansion of the idea without metaphor :

Like one  
Who having into truth, by telling of it,  
Made such a sinner of his memory  
To credit his own lie, he did believe  
He was indeed the duke.

The words “having into truth” are unfortunately corrupted, a rare accident in a text which is remarkably pure, and the more regrettable that it happens at a critical place. The correction usually adopted “having *unto* truth” does not really help the sense. An equally slight change of one letter, namely, the “h” of “having” into “br,” gives “braving into truth,” or bluffing ; and that makes a perfect sense. I was led to make this correction from finding in my own notebook, written hurriedly with a quill, the words “thras-onical braving” (extracted from Gabriel Harvey upon Greene) to read as if “thrasonical having.” It is easy to mistake “br” for “h” in handwriting ; and it is nearly certain that the same mistake of Shakespeare’s own hand had been made in composing the type of ‘A Lover’s Complaint’ (1609), line 236 :

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For she was sought by spirits of richest coat,  
Whose rarest havings made the blossoms dote.

Both the sense and the rhythm here require "bravings," which is common enough as an intransitive participle, easily convertible into a substantive. Let us assume, then, that Antonio was in the habit of bluffing. By repeating what he knew to be untrue, he came to believe it, "to credit his own lie." Antonio was not singular in that ; it is a well-known phenomenon of the mind, which is not even reckoned morbid. It is easy to imagine his opportunities—at the theatre, sitting on the stage among his noble friends, and claiming this or that as his own. From that more or less harmless brag his ambition grew—

To have no screen between the part he played  
And him he play'd it for, he needs will be  
Absolute Milan.

While all these pretensions are quite intelligible in a literary patron and collaborator, their minutely analysed origin and growth makes them seem improbable for actual politics. If there had been no allegory, it would have been unnecessary to weary Miranda with a long narrative, which is remarkable, if not unique, among Shakespeare's for its redundancy and prolixity, and its utter improbability for all the pains taken. In the end the attempt to keep up the figure of political exile is abandoned ; for Prospero and Miranda are put into "the rotten carcase of a *butt*," when it would have been just as easy to have written "boat." Shakespeare's love of a jest gets the better of his grave sense of consistency : this is the famous butt of wine, or rather the rotten carcase of it, which is (or was) one of the perquisites of the Poet Laureate. Prospero was cast adrift in an old wine-cask and driven by the winds and waves to a desert island. Moreover, the rats had left this rotten cask just as if it had been a ship ; and there was room in it for Prospero and the little Miranda, as

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well as for all those necessaries and luxuries which the good Gonzalo provided. Without entering into the joke we shall never extricate the sense.

Thus far we have been dealing with the inception and growth of an ambition on the part of Antonio to be indeed the duke ; the occasion and means by which he effected his purpose remain for the sequel. At this point it becomes necessary to inquire whether Lord Southampton, whom we have reasons for suspecting to be exhibited as Antonio in the political plot with Sebastian (Essex), could ever have been Antonio in the sense of Shakespeare's collaborator in work for the stage. It has been one result of discussing the Baconian caprice that many who will credit Francis Bacon with no more poetry than his Psalms and the one sonnet on Lord Essex, which he admits having "prepared" for the Queen, "though I profess not to be a poet," in December 1599, are yet willing to entertain the hypothesis that Shakespeare must have had some one collaborator or another. The one thing in the Baconian hypothesis which has gained for it a certain degree of credence or antecedent tolerance among the "open-minded" is their difficulty in accounting for Shakespeare's works as the productions of a man who had no college education, and was all the while busy as an actor, if not also as an actor-manager. It is not unreasonable to suppose that he had a "ghost," or at all events a "devil." It is all the more reasonable to entertain that conjecture, as we know in matter of fact that Robert Greene accused him in 1592 of being "an upstart crow beautified with our feathers," and that Ben Jonson, in or about 1601, called him a filching ape, a bold thief, who "takes up all, makes each man's wit his own." But these very accusations, with their dates and the circumstances in which they were made, teach us to look for modes of appropriation, conveyance, assimilation, economic utilisation, as various as the genius of the man himself. With so exceptional a personality as Shakespeare it is

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the unexpected that comes to light. One unexpected result to me, as it is sure to be to others, is that his first and only patron, Lord Southampton, actually worked with him, down to 1598, in the construction of several of his most famous plays. But a still more unexpected result is that his "devil," whom he employed as late as 'Cymbeline,' was the very same plausible, verbose, and ridiculous person whom he held up to the scorn and laughter of mankind (after his death) as Parolles in 'All's Well that Ends Well,' having exhibited him previously as Pistol and as Don Armado. This was Barnabe Barnes, a poet who was thought of great promise when he began as a youth, but missed his mark and fell into utter disrepute, so that even his name is nearly forgotten. I must make some attempt to prove these assertions, both as regards Lord Southampton and Barnes; but I anticipate the greatest difficulty in making any headway with the proof of two such novel propositions. To those who insist upon the rule of criminal evidence, that the strength of a proof is the strength of its weakest link, I give up the case at once. To my own mind it is the mass and momentum of converging probabilities (as Newman says) that brings belief. But evidence of that kind, whether in medical research as a regular occupation, or in literary inquiries as a relaxation, I have always found impossible to draw out for others without the loss of innumerable slight indications, which had gone far to form and confirm one's belief. That is especially the case with the collateral lights from the miscellaneous literature of a period. But the attempt must be made, as the matter is of the first importance for understanding the allegory of the usurping Duke of Milan in 'The Tempest.' This excursus will interrupt the exposition of that play for a considerable space.

It will be necessary to deal first with Shakespeare's earliest work for the stage, when he was a dresser of other men's plays, and apparently without literary

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ambition of his own except in the direction of classical Ovidian verse. Next it falls to show that Lord Southampton himself had both the ability and the ambition to be a poet of a sort, the highly successful anonymous poem called *Willarie his Avisa* being identified as his. Thereafter it will be comparatively easy to show that Shakespeare's first proper and original dramatic work was undertaken about the year 1594, in conjunction with his patron, and continued on the same terms for three or four years.

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## CHAPTER V

### SHAKESPEARE "BUYS THE REVERSION OF OLD PLAYS"

THE date which I would fix for Shakespeare's first writing of wholly original plays, at the instigation of Lord Southampton and in collaboration with his lordship, is the year 1594, their first joint work having been the piece entered by Henslowe as 'The Venetian Comedy,' first published in a highly polished form in 1600 as a work by Shakespeare, with the title of 'The Merchant of Venice.' Before that time his poetic ambition had been to produce classical verse, as he avows plainly enough in the Latin motto which he chose for 'Venus and Adonis':

Let the vulgar admire vile things ; to me may golden Apollo offer full draughts from the Castalian spring.

But in the way of business, as a player and as a useful man, or "Johannes factotum," to the theatrical managers, such as Henslowe, he had been working, more or less against the grain, at those vile things which the vulgar admired. The date of his settling in London was not later than 1587, and probably not earlier than 1586 ; so that we have to imagine him at work in one way or another for some five or six years before we hear him authentically named by Greene in the autumn of 1592 as a Johannes factotum and an upstart crow. Within a few months of those epithets he came out as a genuine poet with his 'Venus and Adonis.'

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It may seem strange that the man who revealed himself before many years as the author of ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’—a combination of poetic fancy and effective stagecraft such as antiquity had never produced, such as no later age has seen or may see—should not have been conscious of his true capability from the first. But we cannot get over the hard facts of his chosen motto, “*Vilia miretur vulgus, mihi flamus Apollo,*” and his express declaration that the classical piece to which he affixed it was the first heir of his invention. The strangeness, however, of his preference for classical verse will appear less if we bear in mind the condition of the London stage when he came to it. It was very different from the condition in which he left it, at the moment of his proud leave-taking in ‘The Tempest.’ Nay more, it was very different, according to the complaints of Spenser and Drayton, from its condition about the middle of Elizabeth’s reign. When Spenser revisited London in 1590–91, after an absence of several years in Ireland, he expressed in his *Tears of the Muses* his sense of the change that had come over the literary world, and in his ninth section, “The Complaint of Thalia,” he deplored more particularly the decline of the drama. Two years after, in 1593, Drayton devoted one of his Eclogues to the same theme, complaining of these “noninos of filthy ribaldry”:

Now we are subject to the beastly clowns  
That all our mirth would utterly destroy.

This was not directed against the inimitable Tarleton, who was dead, nor against Will Kempe, whom Drayton elsewhere compliments. It was in part a complaint that the pastoral fashion of Sidney’s *Arcadia* was passing away. But other excellent things were passing away likewise, such as the genuinely comic interludes, often played by children, and the not less delightful moralities like *Everyman*, which has held so many audiences spell-bound on its revival in our own day. The new taste

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was known among the critics as “barbarism.” It is a mistake to suppose that Shakespeare had ever any sympathy with it, or that he tolerated it any more than he was forced to do in order to earn his living. It was as a champion against that “gross barbarism” that Daniel greeted him in 1594, in a punning allusion to his name, as one who had wielded a pen as it had been a Spear in the fight. But in his own allegory of Caliban we have the best proof not only of his aversion to laxity, claptrap, and indecency on the stage, the *vilia* of the vulgar admiration, but even of his despair of ever getting rid of the popular demand for them. Caliban is

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature  
Nurture can never stick ; on whom my pains,  
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost ;  
And as with age his body uglier grows,  
So his mind cankers,—

as if he were looking forward to the theatres of the Restoration or to the music halls of this year of grace. One of the most powerful of his sonnets, the 111th, is upon his own ill-fortune in having to provide for the public taste :

And almost thence my nature is subdued  
To what it works in, like the dyer’s hand.  
Pity me then, and wish I were renewed.

It is a paradox, but it is true, that Shakespeare in his earliest love of the Muses had no ambition to be a playwright. The closing of the theatres for nearly eighteen continuous months owing to plague, from June 1592 to December 1593, gave him more leisure from his business of player than he probably wished ; but he did not occupy it in writing plays ; he occupied it in producing his highly polished poems, ‘Venus and Adonis’ and ‘The Rape of Lucrece.’ And yet the very last successful play in London before that long interruption of theatrical business, ‘King Henry the Sixth,’ must have proved to him how easily he could

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fill the house by giving his mind to dramatic composition. The original play (now 'I Hen. VI.') was a worthless thing, and most of its worthlessness remains in Shakespeare's text to this hour. But we know from Nash that it drew ten thousand spectators, or more, at its several performances, which appear from Henslowe's diary to have been about twice a week from 1st March 1592 to 22nd June, when the theatres were closed ; and Nash makes it clear that the attraction was Talbot, the terror of the French. Now it is just in those Talbot scenes in rhymed verse, and in two or three others in blank verse, that we recognise the hand of Shakespeare, and the ground of his claiming the play as his property. In the scenes between Talbot and his son the composition changes abruptly to animated rhymed couplets, contrasting with the dull verbiage of blank verse all around them. One can imagine what had happened. Reading over the other man's play—the future author of *Locrine*, as I conjecture—Shakespeare had seen how easily it could be improved at two or three of the most effective points in the action ; accordingly he proceeded to touch it up, and found that the easiest way for himself was to turn the bombastic and forced blank verse into lively and pointed rhymes, which make the part of old Talbot in company with young John all alive, and would have been as music to the ears of the patriotic audience. It is not unlikely that one attraction of the piece may have lain in the coarse presentation of Joan of Arc as a sanctimonious impostor and the mistress of the several French princes in succession. Shakespeare passed over all these scenes with his tongue in his cheek and with contempt in his heart, contenting himself with having given at least one redeeming touch of English valour to the piece, and leaving it for the rest to gratify the appetite of Caliban. He followed the same cynical rule shortly after with 'Titus Andronicus' ; and even in his later period, when he had established for all time a more

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more excellent way, he allowed "the late and much admired play called *Pericles*," to go forth with his name upon the title-page, having redeemed it from worthlessness by rewriting the *Marina* scenes and by occasional touches in the others.

The three parts of 'Henry VI.', as they now stand, are joined in a sequence, as if they had been planned originally by one hand in the order in which they come. But it is probable that they were all by different pens. It is true that the second in the series was originally called the 'The First Part of the Contention of the two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster,' as if it had been intended to follow with the Second Part. But it is probable that the projected Second Part was never written (as happened with Greene's *Alphonsus* and with *Selimus*) ; at all events, what is in effect the continuation of the history, 'The True Tragedie of Richard, Duke of York,' appears to have been an independent piece by a different author. Malone has pointed out one striking historical discrepancy between the two, which led him to entertain a doubt as to the common authorship, although he does not conclude finally against it. Without giving the grounds of my opinion, I may state my conclusion that the author of the 'True Tragedie of Richard, Duke of York' was the same as the author of *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third*, and that the author of both was the author of *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Soliman and Perseda*, namely, Thomas Kyd.<sup>1</sup> As to the second in the 'Henry VI.' series, 'The First Part of the Contention,' which Dr. Johnson held to be the best of the three and Mr. Swinburne considers to have been written

<sup>1</sup> *The True Tragedie of Richard III.* repeats a phrase of Kyd's from *The Spanish Tragedy* which was ridiculed by Ben Jonson—"What ! villain, feed'st thou me with ifs and ands ?" It contains also "foe me no foes," like the "Typhon me no Typhons" of Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*, which are imitated by Falstaff. Among other distinctive marks of Kyd are the frequent use of the appellative "Gentles!" and the striking frequency of the exclamation "Ah!" which occurs fifty-six times in his *Richard III.*

## ‘2 AND 3 HENRY VI.’

beyond question by Marlowe, I am inclined to defer to Mr. Swinburne’s judgment. But in that hypothesis we are confronted with a singular boldness on the part of Shakespeare in dealing with “Marlowe’s mighty line.”

Malone has printed the second and third parts of ‘Henry VI.’ from the final Shakespearian text in such a manner as to show all the lines that are taken unaltered from the original quartos, all those that appear for the first time in the folio of 1623, and all those that are altered in expression in the folio from their substance in the quartos, the two latter classes being marked respectively by asterisks and inverted commas. Malone’s conclusion was, that the asterisked lines, found only in the folio, were Shakespeare’s additions to the plays by another hand, and that the lines reprinted without change from the quartos were by the unknown author, and none of them by Shakespeare. This hypothesis, however, will not work. Mr. Swinburne has pointed out that much of the matter which appears *for the first time* in the folio is just such as we would attribute to the other pen but not to Shakespeare. At the same time it is clear from such passages in the quartos as “She-wolf of France,” and “What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster sink in the ground ?” that Shakespeare had been at work upon the texts before they were printed at all. The best hypothesis seems to be, that he had the author’s manuscript play before him ; that he drew his pen through a good many lines and sequences of lines (nearly all those that are asterisked in Malone’s text) as redundant or bombastic, that he inserted a few passages in place of some struck out, and even rewrote whole scenes, such as the Fourth Scene of Act I. of ‘The True Tragedie’ (‘3 Hen. VI.’). From the MS. copies thus deleted and amended the quartos were composed. Those printed texts, however, must have been revised, probably by Shakespeare himself at his leisure afterwards, in all the passages printed by

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Malone with inverted commas (such as the deathbed scene of Cardinal Beaufort), which are much more numerous in ‘The First Part of the Contention’ than in ‘The True Tragedie.’ Lastly, when the two plays came to be printed in the folio of 1623 as ‘2 Hen. VI.’ and ‘3 Hen. VI.,’ all the passages deleted from the original manuscripts were restored, falling naturally into their places as if they had been merely struck out of the MS. as redundant, proving, indeed, in many instances that they are really redundant and might be omitted without loss to the sense, although they are never at variance with the sense.

If this had been Shakespeare’s treatment of the work of established writers for the stage when it was offered to a theatrical manager, one can understand why Greene should have written so angrily about him in the autumn of 1592. We know that his rhyming Talbot scenes in ‘King Henry the Sixth’ (afterwards ‘1 Hen. VI.’) had secured in the preceding summer an enviable popularity for that piece, which would have fallen below mediocrity without them. His manner was to come in at the most telling places of the action, guided by his knowledge of stage-effect, and to leave the mark of his genius upon these, thus scoring a distinguished success without having had to waste his energies and fatigue his imagination by the construction of a plot, and by keeping the dialogue going continuously through all the action, lively and dull alike. Moreover, he ventured to treat the elevated or inflated blank verse of famous playwrights, let us say Marlowe and Kyd, perhaps Greene himself, with the odious blue pencil. Greene did not live to see the sequel in the folio of 1623 (nor indeed did Shakespeare himself); but it would have been doubly galling to find the excised passages replaced in the text as Shakespeare’s own; such lines, for example, as those in ‘2 Hen. VI.’ which Mr. Swinburne takes to be so peculiarly in Marlowe’s best manner :

## SHAKE-SCENE AND CO.

The gaudy, babbling and remorseful day  
Is crept into the bosom of the sea ;  
And now loud-howling wolves arouse the jades  
That drag the tragic melancholy night ;  
Who with their drowsy, slow, and flagging wings  
Clip dead men's graves, and from their misty jaws  
Breathe foul contagious darkness in the air.

This is put into the mouth of a shipmaster who has just landed near Dover from a ship in the Downs ; so that one can hardly wonder at the blue pencil going through it. The three playwrights whom Greene associates with himself in this grievance against Shakespeare and another (whom Chettle struck out from the libel before printing it) are usually taken to be Marlowe ("thou famous gracer of tragedians"), Lodge ("young Juvenal," "sweet boy"), and Peele ("no less deserving than the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferior"). As to the identification of Lodge, he was thirty-five at the time, and could hardly have been called a "sweet boy" : the description suits Nash better, who was ten or twelve years younger than Lodge, and is called "gallant young Juvenal" by Meres in 1598. Greene says that young Juvenal had quite lately ("lastly") written a comedy in conjunction with himself ; and that I take to have been 'The Taming of a Shrew,' probably the only Shakespearian piece to which Greene or Nash had any claim. As to the identification of Marlowe, he was of course a famous gracer of tragedians, inasmuch as his Jew of Malta and Tamburlaine were favourite parts with leading actors ; and he was also a freethinker, as Greene reprovingly reminds his friend. But Kyd also was a famous gracer of tragedians in respect of his Hieronimo ("Jeronimo") in *The Spanish Tragedy*, a part which was quite as much the ambition of a tragedian as any of Marlowe's ; and he was included with Marlowe in 1593 in a legal process for his so-called "atheism" (it was really Unitarianism). I do not know why George Peele is identified with the third playwright, who is warned to

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have nothing to do with Shakespeare and Co., unless it be that Greene adjures him “by sweet St. George.” It may be that these usual identifications are right, with the exception of Lodge, who should almost certainly be replaced by Nash. But even if that be so, it should not mean that those four, Greene, Marlowe, Nash, and Peele, were the only playwrights, or even the chief, whose work passed under the name of Shakespeare in after years, having been merely dressed for the stage by the latter. There could have been very little of Greene’s own to which he did not affix his name, as he was wont to do with unusual care. Also Marlowe’s short career is fairly well filled with some half-dozen tragedies printed with his name. On the other hand, Kyd, who died in the year after Marlowe, and was six years his senior, has not a single play to his name, not even the famous *Spanish Tragedy*, until the posthumous *Cornelia* of 1594, which was a translation from the French of Garnier. Yet he was known as a famous playwright ; he is called “famous Kyd” by Heywood in 1634, more than a generation after his death ; and by Ben Jonson, in his appreciation of Shakespeare, “sporting Kyd” is joined with Marlowe and Lylly in the triad which Shakespeare “did far outshine.”

We have therefore to look for Kyd’s work, the ground of his living and posthumous fame, amongst anonymous plays. *The Spanish Tragedy* was certainly his ; almost equally certain is it that *Soliman and Perseda* was his, as it is an expansion, with two new comic parts of Basilisco and Piston, of the play within the play in *The Spanish Tragedy*. But there is a more famous play than either of those, although it does not appear ever to have been printed, the original *Hamlet’s Revenge*, which was almost certainly Kyd’s, as it appears to have been constructed upon the same lines as *The Spanish Tragedy* (the revenge motive, a ghost, and a play within the play). Moreover, in Shakespeare’s own play-scene in ‘Hamlet’ there are two or three reminis-

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cences of Kyd's extant work ; and there would have been more if we could have searched the text of his *Hamlet*. In the player king's speech,

Full thirty times hath Phœbus cart gone round  
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,

we have a parody of what was common enough in the plays of the time, but more especially of Kyd's metaphorical manner in such lines as :

Ere Sol had slept three nights in Thetis' lap  
And stall'd his smoking chariot in her flood.<sup>1</sup>

Again Hamlet's doggerel at the end of the “Murder of Gonzago”:

For if the king like not the comedy,  
Why then, belike, he likes it not perdy,

is a burlesque of Hieronimo's remark on the occasion of his own mouse-trap play :

And if the world like not this tragedy,  
Hard is the hap of old Jeronymy.

Thirdly, Hamlet's mock-tragic line “The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge” is a reminiscence of

The screeking raven sits croaking for revenge,  
Whole heads of beasts come bellowing for revenge,

in *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third*, which can be guessed by several idiosyncracies of expression to be by the author of *The Spanish Tragedy* and of *Soliman and Perseda*. Also in rewriting the part of Christopher Sly in the induction to ‘*The Taming of a Shrew*,’ Shakespeare must have been thinking of Kyd ; for he gives to Sly no fewer than three phrases in a short space which were Kyd's, having passed into jokes owing to their singularity.

<sup>1</sup> In one of the opening scenes of *Selimus* which Kyd may have written (see next section), there is an even closer parallel :

Twice fifteen times hath fair Latona's son  
Walked about the world with his great light.

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But the most probable of Shakespeare's reminiscences of Kyd, not less interesting than his reminiscences of the famous clown Dick Tarleton as Yorick, is the Tom o' Bedlam, or Poor Tom of ‘King Lear.’ When Edgar affects lunacy, he has to follow some consistent rôle, which has nothing to do, of course, with his own antecedents ; his talk is the well-feigned rambling of a mind diseased, constructed by Shakespeare with moral rather than medical realism, appropriately to the unfortunate life of some one known to him, but not at all appropriately to Edgar's former life. His original, I believe, was poor Tom Kyd. He was the son of a respectable scrivener in London, well educated at Merchant Taylors' School, and brought up to his father's business of a notary, which he deserted for literature against his father's wish ; as Nash said in 1589, he “left the trade of *Noverint.*” It is known from his own statement to Lord Keeper Puckering that he entered the service of a certain lord about the year 1590-91, and remained therein nearly three years, until he was arrested, on 12th May 1593, on suspicion of being guilty of “a libell that concerned the State.” Whether it be the same affair or not, it appears from extant papers that he was proceeded against, along with Marlowe, on a charge of “atheism.” Marlowe escaped the process by being killed in a tavern quarrel in June 1593, but there is some reason to think that Kyd suffered imprisonment in Bridewell, and that he was even put to the torture. The last we hear of him, before his death in December 1594, is from his own pathetic dedication of *Cornelia* to the Countess of Sussex : “Having no leisure, most noble lady, but such as evermore is travailed with the afflictions of the mind, than which the world affords no greater misery, it may be wondered at by some how I durst undertake a matter of this moment, which both requireth cunning, rest, and opportunity.” The work was a translation from the French ; but at one place (as Mr. Boas has

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shown) he interpolates eighteen lines of his own, including these five :

Time past, with me that am to tears converted,  
Whose mournful passions dull the morning's eyes,  
Whose sweetest sleeps are turned to fearful dreams,  
And whose first fortunes fill'd with all distress,  
Afford no hope of future happiness——

I think it is hardly doubtful that poor Kyd's "afflictions of the mind" were a true disease of melancholia, that his mind had become unhinged, perhaps in his imprisonment of 1593, and that he wrote his last work in lucid intervals after his release. He died before it was printed; and it has been ascertained by the industry of Herr Schick, that his mother, acting on behalf of her husband, renounced the administration of his goods "for divers causes and considerations," according to an entry of 30th December 1594 in the Probate and Administration Act Book of the Archdeaconry of London. I am inclined to suspect that his melancholia was suicidal, and that he had taken his own life.

Now, let us see how all this suits Poor Tom in 'King Lear' :

Away ! the foul fiend follows me !  
"Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind."  
Hum ! go to thy cold bed and warm thee.

The third line is Kyd's much-ridiculed "naked bed" in Jeronimo's speech :

What outcries pluck me from my naked bed,  
And chill my throbbing heart with trembling care,

Shakespeare having used it already in the mouth of Sly, the tinker : "Go by, Jeronimy : go to thy cold bed and warm thee." The best known ballad of the Hawthorn Tree was by Drayton (1593), but there may have been another by Kyd.

Edgar goes on : "Who gives anything to poor Tom !

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whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, and through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire ; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew ; set ratsbane by his porridge”—the haunting thought of suicide in the mind of a melancholic. Again, “Take heed of the foul fiend ; *obey thy parents* ; keep thy word justly ; swear not ; commit not with man's sworn spouse ; set not thy sweet heart on proud array.” Lear asks him, “What hast thou been ?” and Poor Tom answers, “*A serving man*, proud in heart and mind, that curled my hair, wore gloves in my cap,” and so on to the end of that famous catalogue of follies. Then comes an enumeration of his prison and other miseries, ending with a quotation :

But rats and mice and such small deer  
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

The quotation is from the ballad of Sir Bevis of Southampton, where his sufferings in a Saracen dungeon are described. At this point the “sullen and assumed humour of Tom of Bedlam” passes away from the real experiences of Tom Kyd ; which it appears to me to have followed consistently hitherto, on the assumption that Kyd had disobeyed his parents, had become a serving man in the train of a noble, had led a gay life, had suffered imprisonment, and had fallen into melancholy madness and been haunted with the thought of suicide. It is in keeping with Shakespeare's introduction of his other literary contemporaries on his stage that he keeps the literary pursuits entirely out of sight.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The next ballad quotation by Poor Tom is the famous “Childe Rowland to the dark tower came,” which forms the subject of one of Robert Browning's most subtle intuitions. Although it is foreign to my present purpose, I cannot miss the chance of stating how it strikes me. The lunatic's transition from Sir Bevis in his Saracen dungeon to Childe Rowland is natural enough, inasmuch as Rowland and Bevis were both paladins of Charlemagne. The first line of the ballad supposed to be quoted has never been found :

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Poor Tom is one of the most memory-haunting figures in all Shakespeare's plays, only inferior in pathos to the mad Ophelia herself ; and in the hypothesis that Tom Kyd was the original of him, I infer that the dramatic treatment indicates a very tender feeling on Shakespeare's part for the memory of that unhappy playwright. Mr. Boas, in his edition of Kyd, has indicated, without exaggeration, as I think, how much Shakespeare must have owed to Kyd's *Hamlet* in the way of effective situations ; and I believe that it was to Kyd, as the author of *The Troublesome Raigne*, that he owed the main lines of the grand character Faulconbridge in 'King John,' as well as the opening idea of Gloster's great speech :

What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster  
Sink in the ground ? I thought it would have mounted—

---

Childe Rowland to the dark tower came.  
His word was still, Fie, foh, and fum,  
I smell the blood of a British man.

It has been thought unlikely that the chivalrous knight should thirst for the blood of a British man ; and it has been proposed to interpolate a second line, supposed missing, which introduces an ogre as the subject of the blood-thirsty predicate :

The giant roared, and out he ran ;  
His word was still, Fie, foh, and fum, etc.

Of course Poor Tom was mad, and may be excused for having omitted a line, so as to make Rowland himself the smeller of blood. But we may be sure that Shakespeare had method in his madness, and that the enigma had a meaning to himself as it stands ; that is to say, Childe Rowland comes to the dark tower and smells the blood of a British man within. Rowland, I conceive, is Shakespeare himself, the same Rowland, or Orlando, as in 'As You Like It' ; while the "British" man whose blood he smelled is the Oliver of that comedy (see later), the unnatural brother of Orlando, the exact counterpart of the unnatural brother Antonio in 'The Tempest,' Lord Southampton, who had been a prisoner in the dark Tower from February 1601 until April 1603, and owed his release to the prompt clemency of King James (by whose order an Englishman was henceforth to be a British man). Lord Southampton in his gallant youth was compared to Sir Bevis of Southampton, and that seems to me to have been Poor Tom's drift in rambling on from Sir Bevis's "rats and mice and such small deer," to Childe Rowland and "fie, foh, fum." Browning has conceived the dark tower far otherwise, and I am painfully aware that my matter-of-fact association of ideas is unattractive, if not repulsive, in comparison.

## "REVERSION OF OLD PLAYS"

which is Kyd's "Blood sprinkled springs," the paraphrase of the Lancastrian motto, *Cresce crux, sanguis satetur sanguine*, in the induction to *The True Tragedie of Richard III*. If there were these and other obligations on the one side, it is pleasing to think that Shakespeare had written for Kyd certain comic scenes, which have been pronounced by two German critics to be not in Kyd's manner, and indeed too good for him. They occur in the play *Soliman and Perseda*, which was entered for copyright on 22nd November 1592. In this play Kyd works up the materials which he had already used in the subordinate play in his *Spanish Tragedy*, having taken them from a prose work by Wotton, who took them from the French. But the independent drama upon them is enriched by an original and very prominent comic element, the two characters Piston and Basilisco.<sup>1</sup> Herr Schroer and Herr Schick are agreed that this comedy is by a finer hand than Kyd's, the latter suggesting Peele. I do not know enough of Peele's genius to judge, but I am quite sure that Basilisco is the first draft of Shakespeare's Pistol and Parolles. Whoever wrote the part of Basilisco drew it from the life. It is possible that Kyd knew the original, Barnabe Barnes, whose actual cowardice in Essex's expedition to Normandy in 1591, and his boasted valour, were matter of common talk at the time when *Soliman and Perseda* was under hand. But I shall show in several places that Shakespeare knew him well; and in the next section I shall give reasons for believing that it was Barnes himself who wrote the historical play afterwards called the 'First Part of Henry VI.', on his return from the seat of war.

These are roundabout reasons for concluding that Kyd had been more closely associated with Shakespeare

<sup>1</sup> In rewriting the old *Troublesome Raigne of John*, Shakespeare introduced at I. i. 244 a reference to the Basilisco of Kyd's *Soliman*, using, as I believe, a character which he had given to Kyd in order to illustrate a passage which he was adapting from Kyd.

## VARIOUS POSSIBLE AUTHORS

than Greene, or Marlowe, or Peele, or Nash ; but in the nature of the case any reasons given for one view or another can hardly be other than circuitous. Whoever has read the abundant speculations upon this early period of Shakespeare's work for the stage, a period to which every Shakespearian will recur time after time with undiminished interest in the problem, must have remarked how subjective the several points of view have been, and perhaps noticed also how his own impressions have varied from time to time. So many anonymous plays, and so many possible authors for them ! To state and criticise all the several arguments as to the authorship of each of the three parts of 'Henry VI.,' the old 'King John,' the old 'Taming of a Shrew,' and 'Titus Andronicus' (to say nothing for the present of 'Pericles'), would require a separate volume ; and to explain fully the grounds of the writer's own belief would need an inordinate amount of space for citation of passages. I must pass from the subject with a summary statement of opinion. Kyd was the original author of three plays which eventually passed as Shakespeare's after he had rewritten them either wholly or in part : 'The Troublesome Raigne of John King of England' (in two parts, quarto, 1591) ; 'The True Tragedie of Richard, Duke of York' (quarto, 1594) ; and 'Titus Andronicus.' As to the last, there is a question whether Kyd's play was not the earlier form of the same story (still preserved in a German version) which Henslowe enters, on 11th April 1592, under the name of *Titus and Vespacia* ; while the later form, entered by Henslowe under the name *Titus and Ondronicus* on 28th January 1594, would have been adapted from Kyd's by an intermediate hand (probably Barnabe Barnes, the author of *Locrine*), before Shakespeare set to work upon the text. I take Barnes to have been the author of 'King Henry the Sixth' (1592), which was not printed until the folio of 1623 as 'I Hen. VI.' ; the language, except in the

## “REVERSION OF OLD PLAYS”

Shakespearian passages, Act II. Scene iv., Act IV. Scenes v.-vii., and Act V. Scene v. (the last scene), is the verbiage of Parolles ; and the odious exhibition of the Maid of Orleans and of the English nobles in their talk about her and treatment of her, is such as Barnes's imagination might have conceived. ‘The First Part of the Contention,’ the future ‘2 Hen. VI.,’ I assume with good judges to have been the work of Marlowe, perhaps in collaboration with one or more of his friends. There remains the old ‘Taming of a Shrew,’ a comedy of remarkable originality and spirit, which Shakespeare rewrote entirely, so as not to leave a single line of the original standing, but without altering the plot except to simplify it and to change the scene from ancient Athens to modern Padua. I believe it to have been the comedy referred to by Greene as having been lately (1592) written by himself along with “young Juvenal,” meaning Nash. Critics show in it some striking resemblances of thought and expression to Greene's undoubted work ; while the chorus-like part of the drunken tinker, Christopher Sly, in whose presence and for whose behoof the comedy is played by the strolling actors, is exactly in the manner of Nash's *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (acted in 1592), in which Will Summer, jester to Henry VIII., sits through the performance of a play and passes comic remarks upon the action and the actors from point to point. The dual authorship would have been a reason why it was printed anonymously ; if it had been all Greene's he would probably have put his name to it. Shakespeare left out the part of Sly, as drunken chorus, from the body of the play ; but it may be read in the text of Pope, who understood so little the relation between the old ‘Taming of a Shrew’ and Shakespeare's ‘Taming of the Shrew’ as to amend the authentic text of the latter from that of the former.

Lastly, as to Shakespeare's claims to be the author of these old pieces. They were all anonymous until

## A PURCHASED INTEREST

they appeared in the folio edition of his works seven years after his death. But, in the list of twelve plays which he gave to Meres for his literary gossip in the autumn of 1598, he included 'King John' and 'Titus Andronicus,' as well as 'Love's Labour's Won,' under which appropriate title he meant at that time to disguise the identity of 'The Taming of a Shrew.'<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that he did not give to Meres the names of any of the three Henry VI. plays ; and it may be inferred from their omission that he did not intend at that time to claim any right to them. It is nearly certain that he had bought the whole rights to the old 'King John,' 'Taming of a Shrew,' 'First Part of the Contention,' and 'True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York'; for when it came to copyrighting the several thirty-six plays for the folio of 1623, those four were treated as if the copyright had been already secured, although none of them hitherto had been published in the true Shakespearian text : they had been reprinted time after time in their original forms, and probably sold to Shakespeare's account. It must have been this dealing in other men's plays for cash that Ben Jonson had in mind in his splenetic outburst of 1601 against Shakespeare as a literary broker :

At first he made low shifts, would pick and glean,  
Buy the reversion of old plays.

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<sup>1</sup> This suggestion was made first by G. L. Craik, in his 1859 edition of 'Julius Cæsar.' The more closely it is examined, especially in a comparison of the old play with the new, the more apt does it appear. Petruchio wins love's labour in the very practical form of winning a large wager of gold, through his newly-tamed wife's unexpected obedience. The wooer of one of Kate's sisters remarks that "all my labour's lost," because the father insisted upon marrying the shrew of the family first, a condition which was not fulfilled until the boldness and cleverness of Petruchio succeeded where others had failed. On the other hand, there are insuperable objections to the theory that 'Love's Labour's Won' was a name intended at one time for 'All's Well that Ends Well.' There is every reason why that should have been always the name of that play, the proverb occurring at least twice in the text. But the motive for disguising the old 'Taming of a Shrew' under a new name is obvious, although fortunately the intention was not persisted in.

## CHAPTER VI

### SHAKESPEARE'S LITERARY "DEVIL"—BARNABE BARNES

IN Greene's often-cited attack upon Shakespeare in 1592, as one who was "in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country," he coupled him with an associate, whom he characterised in such abusive terms that Chettle, in preparing Greene's tract for the press, struck out the reference as libellous. Chettle was called upon by Shakespeare to apologise for what he had printed about him, which he did at once and handsomely, expressing his regret that he had not struck out the libel upon the one as well as the other. The other, he explained, was a person whom he did not know, and had no wish to know, but he "reverenced his learning." This excludes any of Shakespeare's fellow-actors, or a theatrical proprietor, such as Henslowe, who was an uneducated man. It has been taken usually to mean Marlowe (by Dyce and others), which appears to me to be impossible, inasmuch as Marlowe is assumed by the same critics to have been one of the three friends of Greene who are cautioned in a direct personal address to have nothing more to do with Shake-scene and Co. It was because Chettle "reverenced his learning" that he had spared the man who was in the same condemnation with Shakespeare; and, by implication, it was because the latter was not a gentleman of education that he had not been treated with the same consideration. Shakespeare, then, was associated in the mind of

## SHAKE-SCENE AND ANOTHER

Greene with some person of learning, who was not less obnoxious than the Johannes factotum of the playhouse on account of adapting or copying the "admired inventions" of himself and his three playwright friends. It must be a matter of regret to posterity that Chettle deleted the passage referring to Shakespeare's associate, for it would almost certainly have revealed an identity as clearly as Shake-scene does, Chettle himself being aware who was meant. I have given reasons in the last section for believing that Kyd was associated closely with Shakespeare at that date; but it is hardly conceivable that Greene should have included a genuine and established playwright like Kyd in his plural of "burrs," "puppets," "antics," "apes," "rude grooms," "buckram gentlemen," "peasants," and "painted monsters." Kyd may not have been one of Greene's boon companions; but we know from documents that he got into trouble the year after on account of his supposed adherence to Marlowe's freethinking or "Machiavellian" principles, which are the very matter of Greene's own penitence in this tract. I am therefore inclined to look in another direction than Marlowe or Kyd for the unknown partner of Shake-scene and Co.

The literary character whom I shall have to associate closely with Shakespeare in several places of the sequel is a man whose name is now well-nigh forgotten, Barnabe Barnes. He was the acknowledged author of two volumes of lyrical verse, in 1593 and 1595, of a prose treatise in 1606, and of a tragedy in 1607. He became well known, even notorious, in his day, having been handled very freely, under his name, by Nash in his pamphlets upon Gabriel Harvey, and by Campion in two of his collections of Epigrams. But there is nowhere a single word or hint to connect him with Shakespeare. The evidence is wholly constructive, and is so dependent one part upon another that it can hardly be stated at any one place without seeming to beg the question which underlies the whole. The nearest contact

## BARNABE BARNES

between him and Shakespeare, which is hardly problematical, was the production of his tragedy, *The Devil's Charter* (on the crimes of the Borgias) by the players of the Globe Theatre on Candlemas night, 1607, upon King James's private stage at Whitehall, five weeks after the original production of 'King Lear' upon the same stage and by the same company. The juxtaposition is as singular as I believe the personal relations between the respective authors to have been. His part in Shakespeare's life is not a determining one, as Southampton's may be said to have been ; he might indeed be omitted from it altogether without the loss of much more than the original study for Pistol and Parolles ; all the literary help that the dramatist ever got from him might easily have come from any other source, and might have remained always anonymous, so unessential is it to his real merit. It is the strangeness of the connection that makes it, as I think, interesting :—a literary assistant whom he used also for a comic model, an original playwright whose plots are full of horrors and all unnaturalness, an original poet whose style is verbiage.

The evidence connecting Barnes with Shakespeare groups itself around the well-known tragedy of *Locrine*, which becomes as it were the keystone of an arch of probabilities. If the authorship of *Locrine* can be brought home to him, then much more becomes clear at once. The style of *Locrine* is the style of Pistol and Parolles ; it is a peculiar kind of verbiage, often meaningless and nonsensical, mere sound and fury signifying nothing, which hardly another of the many Elizabethan playwrights, with all their bombast, was insincere enough, or unreal enough, to practice. Amongst all that great company of writers there was only one Parolles. Secondly, the plot of *Locrine* is melodrama of a peculiar kind, ghastly horrors and impossible pathos, which resembles most the construction of Kyd in *The Spanish Tragedy*, but without Kyd's

## THE AUTHOR OF *LOCRINE*

ingenuous simplicity : it is *sui simile*, like nothing but itself, as we find it again in ‘*Titus Andronicus*’ and *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks*, as well as in certain scenes of ‘*Pericles, Prince of Tyre*.’ A couplet at the end of *Selimus*, by another hand than the author’s, and with a twinkle of the true Shakespearian fun, hits off this kind of tragedy neatly :

If this first part, gentle, likes you well,  
The second part shall greater murthers tell.

*Locrine* was entered for copyright on the 20th of July 1594, and published towards the end of 1595—without an author’s name, but with the intimation that it was “newly set foorth, overseene and corrected, by W. S.” There was, of course, only one W. S. whose name would then have been any recommendation to a play. On the strength of Shakespeare’s initials, this astonishing tragedy was included, along with ‘*Pericles*’ and five others, as the work of Shakespeare in the third folio, the Restoration edition of 1664, and is still catalogued among the works “attributed to Shakespeare.” Apart from the internal evidence, the original title-page makes it quite clear, by the correct use of the comma, that W. S. had merely overseen the work. On examining it, one finds that he had overseen it with huge contempt and audacity. He read through the first Act until he came to the entrance of Strumbo, the comic character. Strumbo is a cobbler of Caithness (the geography being that of Holinshed’s legendary chronicles of our island, north and south), who had been clumsily copied from the famous Tarleton’s Derick in the old play of *Prince Hal*. The original first comic scene appears to have been occupied with Strumbo’s wooing of his first love Dorothy, and was probably in the same gross vein as the wooing of his second love Margery, in the third Act. Shakespeare revised only the first comic scene, which he rewrote by turning the cobbler Strumbo, for the nonce, into a caricature of the

## BARNABE BARNES

author, the same person whom he caricatured afterwards, and at greater length, as Don Armado in ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost.’ The wooing of Dorothy becomes almost identical with the wooing of the wench Jacquenetta. I must refer the reader to the full text of both, and cite only a sentence or two from the love-letter of the cobbler, which will show that Shakespeare had calmly changed him into a gentleman who signs himself Signior Strumbo : “So it is, Mistress Dorothy, and the sole essence of my soul, that the little sparkles of affection kindled in me towards your sweet self, hath now increased to a great flame, and will, ere it be long, consume my poor heart, except you with the pleasant water of your secret fountain quench the furious heat of the same. Alas ! I am a gentleman of good fame and name, majestical, in ‘parel comley, in gait portly,’ etc. This is Barnes, the author himself ! The “pleasant water of your secret fountain” is a refined travesty of the figure of speech in Barnes’s notorious Aquarius sonnet in the series on the Signs of the Zodiac in his first volume of poems (1593), which Campion made the subject of a witty Latin epigram (1595) and Marston the object of his contemptuous satire (1599).

Shakespeare left his mark upon *Locrine* in the second scene of the first Act, and nowhere else ; it is one of the merriest of his merry jests, and the most audacious, because he made fun of the author in his own gloomy tragedy. It is quite in keeping with all that we know of Barnabe Barnes that he should have been content to print this, glorying in his own ridicule, as Pistol and Parolles glory in their shame.

The tragic love-scenes of *Locrine* concern Elstred, the mistress of the legendary British king Locrine, and are based upon Lodge’s poem upon her, which was published the year before (1593). The military excursions and alarums, with the bombastic speeches of King Brutus and his sons, and of Humber, king of the Scythians, are taken from Holinshed, of whose

## THE AUTHOR OF *SEЛИMUS*

*Chronicles* Barnes was a most diligent student. In Holinshed also he found the materials for *King Leir*, a history (not a tragedy as in Shakespeare's play) which was performed twice at Henslowe's theatre in April 1594, and entered for copyright in May of that year, but was not printed until 1605, when the great 'King Lear' was imminent. I ascribe this humdrum piece to Barnes on various internal grounds, and not least upon the ground that Lear himself, Cordella, and the faithful Lord Perillus (who corresponds with Kent) are all made to express the pious sentiments which are distinctive of Barnes in his second phase, the *Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets*, published in the next year (1595). The other plays which I would ascribe to him in greater part include the two afterwards claimed by Shakespeare by reason of his embellishments upon them, 'Titus Andronicus' and the 'First Part of Henry VI.' (which might have been called 'Joan of Arc'), as well as 'Pericles' (which bore Shakespeare's name on the quartos, but was not included in the two first folios of his works) and *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks*, which was printed by Creede, the printer of *Locrine*, anonymously in 1594. The last has lately been "reclaimed" for Greene, and reprinted as his in a popular series, upon what appears to me the slightest of critical grounds. Greene could never have written nonsensical verbiage, such as the figure of the ship

Whom waves do toss one way and winds another ;  
nor the poor imitation of Marlowe in the speech by  
Bajazet :

Ah, Aga, Bajazet fain would speak to thee,  
But sudden sorrow eateth up my words.  
Bajazet, Aga, fain would weep for thee,  
But cruel sorrow drieth up my tears.  
Bajazet, Aga, fain would die for thee,  
But grief hath weakened my poor aged hands.

This is matched only by that precious morsel which

## BARNABE BARNES

Shakespeare has left standing in his revision of ‘*Titus Andronicus*,’ in pure love of a joke :

*Boy.* O grandsire, grandsire ! even with all my heart  
Would I were dead, so you did live again !—  
O Lord, I cannot speak to him for weeping :  
My tears will choke me, if I ope my mouth.

Kyd sometimes comes near to this contradiction-in-terms manner, as in Jeronimo’s famous “naked bed”; but while he makes an occasional ingenuous slip, Barnes can hardly ever “keep his eye on the object,” but is the constant victim of verbiage. Pistol’s “his heart is fracted and corroborate” when his master Falstaff was dying, is a classical instance of the contradiction-in-terms style. *Selimus* has close affinities with ‘*Titus Andronicus*’ also in its bloody mutilations and in its Machiavellian principles. However, the Machiavellian passages are strikingly good, especially the speech in answer to the line “There is a hell and a revenging God,” which begins :

Tush, Sinam, these are school conditions.

These, and all that there is excellent in *Selimus* are in the first part of it, which is marked also by the same frequent lapse into rhyme (of various measures) that we find in *The Troublesome Raigne of John*. It is, indeed, not improbable that the hand of Kyd is to be traced both in ‘*Titus Andronicus*’ and in *Selimus*, and that Barnes adapted the former from its earlier form of *Titus and Vespasia*, produced on Henslowe’s stage in April 1592, and completed the latter after Kyd had been obliged to give it up through imprisonment (on account of those very Machiavellian principles) and subsequent illness. At all events, after about the 600th line, *Selimus* degenerates greatly, losing the lively rhymed passages, falling into the same kind of verbiage as in *Locrine*, and introducing at least two specific things which show the hand of Barnes. The first of these, at line 729,

## THE AUTHOR OF *SELIMUS*

is a speech by Acomat, which is as nearly as possible Barnes's own account of himself in his first lyrical volume, *Parthenophil and Parthenope*, a profession of martial spirit grafted upon precocious sensuality for which he was ridiculed as a braggart for the rest of his life :

Perhaps you wonder why prince Acomat,  
Delighting heretofore in foolish love,  
Hath chang'd his quiet to a soldier's state,  
And turn'd the dulcet tunes of Hymen's song  
Into Bellona's horrible outcries.  
You think it strange that, whereas I have lived  
Almost a votary to wantonness,  
To see me low lay off effeminate robes  
And arm my body in an iron wall.  
I have enjoyed quiet long enough,  
And surfeited with pleasure's surquidrie,<sup>1</sup>  
A field of dainties I have passed through,  
And been a champion to fair Cytheree.  
Now since this idle peace hath wearied me  
I'll follow Mars and wars another while,  
And dye my shield in dolorous vermeil.

Pistol himself never surpassed "dolorous vermeil."

The second Barnsian characteristic is the introduction, near the end, of a comic part, that of the shepherd Bullithrumble, which is obviously by the same hand as the comic part of Strumbo in *Locrine*. In both the comic man speaks of his wife's finger-nails as her "ten commandments." In both he sits down to eat his victuals in a solitary place ; a hungry fugitive comes in sight, who mistakes the situation of the comic man, so that in the one case the latter replies, "Good Lord, sir, you are deceived. My name's Bullithrumble," and in the other, "O alas, sir, you are deceived, I am

<sup>1</sup> "Surquedrie" occurs in Chaucer, meaning arrogance ("Parson's Tale," 403). With the same meaning it is used in Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda* in the mouth of Basilisco, whom I take to have been Barnes, as he is the first draft of Pistol. It occurs also in Pandolfo's part of the dialogue "Of Love, of Women," chapter xii. of Florio's Italian-English conversations called *Second Frutes* (1591) : "Love is a chimaera, mixt of lion, of goat and of dragon—lion for surquedry, goat for lechery, dragon for cruelty."

## BARNABE BARNES

not Mercury, I am Strumbo" (an adaptation from Plautus).<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, there is the question whether Barnes was not the author of the 'First Part of Henry VI.', in which Shakespeare's hand can be traced only in the rhymed passages between the two Talbots, and in the scene in the Temple garden (wherein the general theme of the Wars of the Roses is opened), and in the wooing of Margaret of Anjou by Suffolk as the attorney for the king, with Suffolk's great speech to the king on his return. The rhymed Talbot passages were certainly in the play when it was drawing full houses in the spring of 1592 ; but the Shakespearian blank-verse scenes, which are necessary as links between '1 Henry VI.' and '2 and 3 Henry VI.', may well have been introduced when the three plays were being revised by Shakespeare, so as to make them into a consistent trilogy.

It is agreed by the critics that the First Part stands by itself in bad pre-eminence. It is not only inferior in style, but its tone and sentiment in relation to the Maid of Orleans is positively odious. Mr. Swinburne, who has remarked the resemblance of the style to the weaker portions of 'Titus Andronicus' and to *Selimus*, is of opinion that it is not above the range of Peele "at his best," and that, as he had already defamed Eleanor of Castile, he would take no discredit by being made the defamer of the Maid of Orleans. There does not appear, on inspection, to be any essential likeness in Peele's *Edward I.* to the coarseness and brutality of the English heroes in their talk about, and treatment of, Joan of Arc. If there were any historical or traditional excuse, such as Peele had in the case of Queen Eleanor,

<sup>1</sup> The "business" of the shepherd Bullithrumble in *Selimus* is not unlike the action at a certain part of the popular farce *Musedorus*, which contains a curious pun upon the name Barnes, and another pun upon the name Constable, as well as an enigmatic reference to the two persons having been born in adjoining parishes (Henry Constable was born at Newark and Barnabe Barnes at York). It is singular that *Musedorus* is another of the plays "attributed to Shakespeare," Payne Collier having convinced himself that at least one scene was his.

## THE AUTHOR OF 'I HENRY VI.'

for the view taken of her in 'I Henry VI.' as a religious impostor, who became the mistress of the several French princes in succession, and pleaded pregnancy in the end to save herself from the stake, there can be no excuse for the tactless, tasteless, verbose way in which it is set forth. Besides the hypothesis of Peele's authorship, the only other as to this most puzzling of the three parts of 'Henry VI.' is that it was the work of a combination of the whole Greene coterie, including Lodge. That Greene was thinking of its great success during the months preceding, when he penned his attack upon Shakespeare, seems very probable; but probable also that he had been pointing at the real author of it in that part of the libel which Chettle suppressed.

I take the real author to have been Barnabe Barnes, for various reasons. The style is the style of *Locrine*, of the latter two-thirds or three-fourths of *Selimus*, and of the unrevised portions of 'Titus Andronicus,'—the style of Pistol at his desk. Barnes was the original, as I shall show, of Pistol, Don Armado, and Parolles. Shakespeare caricatured him also as Strumbo in his own play of *Locrine*, in the only scene of it which he rewrote, and as Lodowick in 'Edward III.', which was also the work of Barnes in the three last Acts. He had no opportunity of caricaturing his collaborator in 'I Hen VI.', but he took the first opportunity of doing so in the part of Basilisco, in Kyd's play of *Soliman and Perseda*, at the end of the same year. It is indeed in 'I Henry VI.' that we find the suggestion of the name Basilisco, and of its subsequent change to Pistol. These lines, from the fourth Act, contain a play upon the two meanings of basilisk, the fabulous creature with deadly glance and a weapon of artillery:

O were mine eyeballs into bullets turned  
That I in rage might shoot them at your faces!

Also the glance of the basilisk is ascribed (by the author,

## BARNABE BARNES

but not in history) to the deceased Henry V. at the opening of the play :

His sparkling eyes, replete with wrathful fire,  
More dazzled and drove back his enemies  
Than mid-day sun fierce bent against their faces.

It was Barnes himself who was celebrated for his ferocious “cat-a-mountain” looks, which served to gain him a wholly undeserved reputation for martial spirit ; and that is why they are proper to the aspect and mien of Pistol, who looked as if he were always ready to go off, but never did. That is also the leading idea of Basilisco in his bragging with Piston, in Kyd’s play.<sup>1</sup> Barnes had lately returned from the seat of war in Normandy, from which the stories of his cowardice followed him to London, to give the lie to his bragging, and to make him the butt of the wits. As Nash tells us, he returned to wield the more congenial weapon of the pen, the first achievement of which might very well have been the “drum-and-trumpet thing,” ‘King Henry the Sixth,’ or the English in France at the time of Joan of Arc. He had taken it to Henslowe’s theatre, and had there made the acquaintance of Shakespeare, who had been asked to dress it for the stage. Shakespeare appropriated it eventually as his own ; and I can find no more rational explanation of his having done so than that it was the work of the singular person whom he came to employ as his literary devil on some subsequent occasions.

If that hypothesis be correct, we have to date his first connection with Barnes as early as 1591 or 1592, or soon after the latter had returned from his brief experience of campaigning.

It is known that Barnes courted the society of the

<sup>1</sup> The proof of the identity of Basilisco with Pistol is one of those difficulties which I meet with often in this work. It depends upon an impression from reading the original, which cannot be conveyed by picking out a phrase here or there ; but I will add one suggestive instance, Basilisco’s oath, “Now, by the marble face of the welkin,” which became Pistol’s afterwards, with variations.

## PATRONISED BY SOUTHAMPTON

wits, as well as of the gallants and nobles. Amongst those to whom he wrote sonnets were Essex and Southampton. His lodging was in Holborn, not far from Southampton House. He was intimate with Florio, who was almost a retainer of Southampton's (and had been servitor to Barnes's brother at Oxford), and it is fairly certain that he was one of the literary coterie who gathered round the young patron of letters. It does not appear that Shakespeare was at all intimate with Southampton before the date of 'Venus and Adonis' (April 1593). Whether Barnes brought Shakespeare to his lordship, or Shakespeare brought Barnes, I shall maintain in the sequel that all three were concerned in a collaboration which resulted in several great plays afterwards claimed by Shakespeare, and in one, 'Edward III.', which he did not claim.

The evidence that Shakespeare knew Barnabe Barnes well, and had some peculiar interest in him, depends upon the discovery of his portrait in several of the plays, reproducing the characteristics which are ascribed to him under his name by Nash and others. The evidence that Barnes was used by him to construct plots and to compile materials from Holinshed and other sources depends chiefly upon certain curious things found in so late a play as 'Cymbeline.' The question is most complicated ; but, as it will be a curious fact if it can be disentangled and made good, I shall attempt to deal with it here as a whole, following such order as may be practicable. First a few authentic facts as to Barnes.

He was born at York in 1569, the son of one of the cathedral canons, who was appointed by Lord Burghley successively Bishop of Carlisle and of Durham. An elder brother, Emanuel, went to Magdalen College, Oxford, and there, when he was of a master's standing, had the celebrated John Florio for his servitor, in May 1581. "Barnabye Barnes," as his name is given in the matriculation lists, entered in June 1586 at Brasenose,

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of which house his father had been a Fellow. He was then seventeen ; but it appears from Nash that he had been known as a youth of promise before that to Sir Philip Sidney (who died in 1586) ; which is less improbable than it may seem to us, both by reason of the early maturity of many in that age, and from Barnes's own statement, in one of his poems, that his manly passions were developed at the precocious age of fourteen. He must have been in London in 1588, for he tells us in a work of the year 1606 that he had seen the heroic bearing of the Queen at the time of the Armada. In 1591 he got a commission in the expedition under Lord Essex to Normandy, in aid of Henry of Navarre against the Duke of Parma. He recalled this in his work of 1606 (instancing Essex's habit of sharing in the sports and labours of the common soldiers—setting the watch, walking the round, etc. like Shakespeare's Henry V. before the battle of Agincourt), and “an infinite number” of cases of insubordination towards officers. The latter testimony is important, because it gives colour to the statement of Nash, that Barnes, after a week or two of following the camp, went to the General to get leave to return home, being in fear of his life from the rough soldiery. “Upon this motion there were divers warlike knights and principal captains who, rather than they would be bereaved of his pleasant company, offered to pick out a strong guard amongst them for the safeguarding and better shielding him from peril.” Nash is ironical, but he probably meant it as true that the headquarters' staff did enjoy Barnes's pleasant company. By all accounts he must have been a person of some fascination upon a superficial view—majestic in bearing, well dressed, an exquisite in his language, and a source of amusement to manlier spirits than himself. On his return he seems to have bragged of his exploits in the field ; for Thomas Campion, who wrote witty Latin epigrams on all kinds of themes, made one of his

## EPIGRAMMED BY CAMPION

great hits upon young Barnes, the lines having been “universally applauded” according to Nash. They are ii. 80, in his volume of 1595:

Mortales decem tela inter Gallica caesos,  
Marte tuo perhibes. In numero vitium est :  
Mortales nulos si dicere, Barne, volebas,  
Servasset numerum versus, itemque fidem.

“ You maintain that you slew ten in the French war. There is a mistake in the number. If you had said ‘none,’ my Barnes, the verse would have kept the metre as well as spoken the truth.” Nash’s free paraphrase of Campion from memory was: “ He shows how he bragged, when he was in France he slew ten men ; when, fearful cowbaby, he never heard piece shot off but he fell flat on his face.” A still wittier epigram of Campion’s upon him in the same collection had reference to his volume of poems, *Parthenophil and Parthenope*, published by the help of Gabriel Harvey in 1593. Among these sonnets is a sequence of twelve upon the Signs of the Zodiac. They are delicately, or rather indelicately, suggestive. Under Capricorn, he is ingeniously goaty. Under Aquarius, to show the degree of intimacy with his mistress, he mingles his kisses in her wine, and thus insinuates himself into her very inmost parts. Campion completes the transit of the wine through the emunctories *usque ad matellam*:

Exceptus tandem, qualis amator eris ?

Barnes’s first volume of verse proves that he was certainly ingenious in fancy, and that he had a copious vocabulary, but that insincerity and verbosity were his besetting sins. Those faults are seen most in his personal sonnets, the flattering ones addressed to Lords Essex, Southampton and others, the scurrilous ones written upon Nash in respect of his quarrel with Gabriel Harvey, in which Barnes was foolish enough

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to mix himself. Nash admits that “there was sometimes some pretty expectation of this *Patter-wallet* and *Megiddo*,” and gives a most interesting account of how Sir Philip Sidney at one time favoured him. Gabriel Harvey, the arbiter of classical taste, had a high opinion of him, calling him “Parthenopaeus, the son of the brave Meleager, Homer himself, and the swift Atalanta, Calliope herself. . . . Be thou, Barnabe, the gallant poet like Spenser, or the valiant soldier like Baskerville; and ever remember thy French service under the brave Earl of Essex.” Even so robust an old campaigner and so pithy a poet as Churchyard ranked him, in 1595, with Spenser and Daniel :

One Barnes, that Petrarch's scholar is,  
May march with them in rank.

Two years after *Parthenophil*, he published a second volume, *A Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets*, with a dedication to Dr. Tobie Mathew, his father's successor in the see of Durham, and an address “to the Christian readers.” This is more purely verbiage than the former volume, and makes a most unpleasant impression. Both the prose prefaces and the verse are filled with long strings of words from the great hymns of the Apocalypse and other exalted passages of Scripture, without one touch of genuine religious emotion. The first sonnet shows how a change had come over him between 1593 and 1595 :

No more lewd lays of lighter loves I sing,  
Nor teach my lustful Muse abused to fly  
With sparrow's plumes, and for compassion cry  
To mortal beauties which no succour bring ;  
But my Muse, feathered with an Angel's wing,  
Divinely mounts aloft unto the sky.

The change from the material wine of the Aquarius sonnet of 1593 is thorough enough, if somewhat abrupt :

## HIS PIOUS PHASE

To my poor Muse let him his ears incline,  
Thirsting to taste of that celestial wine  
Whose purple stream hath our salvation won.  
O gracious Bridegroom and thrice lovely Bride,  
Which come and fill : who will for ever cry  
“Water of life to no man is denied :  
Fill still who will, if any man be dry.”  
O heavenly voice ! I thirst, I thirst and come  
For life, with other sinners to get some.

It was this sudden change of tune that disgusted men most, and more than anything else made him a mark for ridicule. Nash calls his *Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets* “such another device as the godly ballad of John Careless or the song of ‘Green Sleeves’ moralised.” He is heard of next in connection with John Florio’s Italian-English dictionary called *A World of Wordes*, to which he contributed a congratulatory poem over his name, and almost certainly also the three dedicatory sonnets signed “Il Candido,” to the Earls of Southampton and Rutland and the Countess of Bedford. The name of Barnes disappears from view thereafter until Campion’s new volume of epigrams in 1602, in one of which he is exhibited with remarkable plainness as a married man maintained in that capacity by Gabriel Harvey. Next we hear of him in 1606 as the author of a prose treatise on the services of the State, fulsomely dedicated to King James ; and the year after as the author of a tragedy, *The Devil’s Charter*, which was produced on the King’s private stage at Whitehall by the Globe company on Candlemas night, 1607. He died in November 1609, and was buried at Durham. These appear to be all the biographical facts, except that he was the reputed author of an unpublished tragedy called *The Battle of Hexham*.

Into this meagre outline we have to fill the form and colour of Barnes as an acquaintance of Shakespeare’s from as early a date as 1592, as his “plotter” especially in the plays based upon Holinshed, and at the same time as the butt of his wit. In the latter capacity he

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appears first as Basilisco in the Shakespearian scenes of Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*; next in his own play *Locrine* in one of the Strumbo scenes; then as Pistol in the original 'Henry V.' (and subsequently); then as Don Armado in 'Love's Labour's Lost'; and lastly, in a general review of his whole career, as Parolles in 'All's Well that Ends Well.' His identity can be proved most easily in the two last characters, which I shall therefore deal with somewhat fully.

### BARNABE BARNES AS DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

The Don Armado of 'Love's Labour's Lost' (produced at Christmas, 1597) is a finished study, adapted to a Court auditory, with innumerable witty touches, which were almost certainly recognised at the time, and are thus the means of proving his identity with Barnes. They are taken both from his volume of lyrical verse and from the three sonnets, signed "Il Candido," which John Florio got written for his *World of Wordes*, and from the dialogue on Love in his *Second Frutes*. Warburton was led to suspect some connection between 'Love's Labour's Lost' and Florio, whom he took to be the original of the pedant Holofernes. Johnson did not think the part suited Florio. It will be found to suit Gabriel Harvey, whose identity is probably concealed in the very deep wit of V. ii. 600-634, which needs Nash's *Have with You to Saffron Walden* to explain it. The humour of the following by Holofernes upon Armado is that Harvey is charging his pupil and *protégé* Barnes with faults which are also his own.

*Nath.* I did converse this quondam day with a companion of the king's, who is intituled, nominated, or called Don Adriano de Armado.

*Holofernes.* Novi hominem tanquam te : his humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous and thrasonical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate as I may call it.

## AS DON ARMADO

*Nath.* A most singular and choice epithet.

[*Draws out his table-book.*

*Holo.* He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the thread of his argument. I abhor such fanatical phantasimes, such insociable and point-devise companions ; such rackers of orthography, as to speak “dout” fine when he should say “doubt” ; “det” when he should pronounce “debt”—d, e, b, t, not d, e, t ; he clepeth a calf, caulf ; half, haulf ; neighbour vocatur nebour ; neigh, abbreviated ne. This is abominable, which he would call abominable ; it insinuateth me of insanie : anne intelligis, domine ? to make frantic, lunatic.

*Nath.* Laus Deo. Bene intelligo.

It is obvious that Holofernes is finding fault with Armado for mannerisms which he himself is exemplifying all the while. “Thrasonical” brag was originally invented by Harvey for Greene. The joke about pronouncing debt, d, e, b, t, not d, e, t, appears to refer to Harvey’s spelling “your dettour” at the end of one of his prefaces, and to the rhyme in Il Candido’s sonnet to the Countess of Bedford :

Excellent madam, chief grace of the Graces,  
Mind of the Muses, commendation’s letter,  
To whom for virtue Nature is a detter.

The not altogether rare spelling “abominable” is found in Barnes’s *Locrine* (quarto of 1595) ; Armado’s fault did not lie in that spelling, but in not sounding the *h* in pronouncing. “He clepeth a calf, caulf” is true of Barnes. Thus, in his acknowledged verse, balm is baulme. In ‘Edward III.’ the mannerisms of spelling are striking in some parts of the first quarto (1596) : they are all removed in the second (1599).<sup>1</sup> Thus the Duke of Lorraine says (in the quarto of 1596) :

I doe pronounce defyaunce to thy face ;

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<sup>1</sup> The following are some of the instances in *Locrine* : countermaund, demaund, braunch, graunt, daunce, launce, launciers. On the other hand, vaults is “valts,” and guarded “garded.” Devoted is “devolted,” hemm’d is “hembde ;” strands or stronds (of Albion) is “strons,” uncouth is “uncoth,” youngest is “yoongst,” set forth is “set foorth,” like the “bray foorth” of ‘Edward III.’

## BARNABE BARNES

and the Black Prince answers, in a true Shakespearian speech :

Defiance, Frenchman ; we rebound it back.

Except in the passages almost entirely Shakespearian, France is Fraunce. Thus the first occurrence of "France" is in the following by King Edward :

See how occasion laughes me in the face.  
No sooner minded to prepare for France, etc.

This affectation of archaic spelling is one of the means of tracking Barnes in works which do not bear his name, and one of the means of identifying him as Armado.

The identity of Barnes, still complicated with Harvey, is shown principally in Armado's wooing of Jacquenetta, the authentic documents for Barnes's sentiments being his first volume of lyrical verse and the sonnets to Lords Rutland and Southampton, written by "Il Candido" for Florio. That *nom-de-plume* appears to be pointed at in "draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-coloured ink which here thou viewest, beholdest, surveyest, or seest."<sup>1</sup> The sonnet to Lord Rutland, whose family name was Manners, is occupied with puns upon "manners" and "manors." These reappear in the following by Costard, describing his capture by Armado in the company of Jacquenetta.

*Cost.* In manner and form following, sir ; all those three : I was seen with her in the manor-house sitting with her upon the form, and taken following her into the park, which, put together, is in the manner and form following.

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<sup>1</sup> That Barnes was "Il Candido" is made probable by what Nash says in *Have with You to Saffron Walden*. In the midst of his remarks upon Barnes, he brings in an apocryphal gentlewoman, supposed Harvey's patroness, in whose name a sonnet had been written preceding the one signed with Barnes's name. She is called "the excellent gentlewoman, his patroness, or rather championess, in this quarrel, 'meeter by nature and fitter by nurture to be an enchanting angel with a white quill than a tormenting fury with her black ink.' . . . The gentlewoman having taken her l'envoy, Barnabe Barnes steps in with an epistle to the right worshipful his especial dear friend, Gabriel Harvey, Doctor of the Law."

## AS DON ARMADO

One line of the Rutland sonnet is the occasion of the long joke about the colour of green, which seems to have been associated at that time with Delilah : Samson “surely affected her for her *wit*” (perhaps the green *wishes* are meant, just as Moth is pronounced Mote).

Proving, by profiting, where you have been,  
Bemantling grave conceits in colour green.

The sonnet to Southampton contains these lines :

Brave Earl, bright pearl of Peers, peerless Nobilitie,  
The height of arms and arts in one aspiring,  
Valour with grace, with valour grace attiring ;  
Who, more to amplify virtue's habilitie,  
To add to fore-learn'd faculty facilitie,  
Now liv'st in travel, . . .  
Immutable in travel's mutabilitie.

These rhymes are parodied by Shakespeare thus :

*Nath.* Perge, good Master Holofernes, perge, so it shall please you to aborogate scurrilitie.

*Holo.* I will something affect the letter, for it argueth facilitie.  
*(Recites)*

The preyful princess pierced and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket, etc.

Coming to the wooing of Jacquenetta :

*Armado.* I will hereupon confess I am in love ; and as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love with a base wench. If drawing my sword against the humour of affection would deliver me from the reprobate thought of it, I would take Desire prisoner, etc.

This is Barnes's militant attitude against the seductions of the sex (see also under *Selimus*, p. 151) :

Mine eyes, these vain seducers, I did fix  
On Pallas and on Mars, home and in field ;  
And, armed strongly lest my better part  
To milder objects should itself inmix,  
I vow'd I never would to beauty yield.

But he capitulated to the charms of Jacquenetta :

Adieu, valour ! rust, rapier ! be still, drum ! for your manager is in love ; yea, he loveth. Assist me, some extemporal god of

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rhyme, for I am sure I shall turn sonnet. Devise, wit ; write, pen ; for I am for whole volumes in folio.

This is Nash's account of Barnes leaving the war in France : "But home he would, nothing could stay him, to finish *Parthenophil and Parthenope*."

Again, Don Armado epitomises the philosophy of Barnes, as Strumbo had already done in *Locrine* :

I do affect the very ground, which is base, where her shoe, which is baser, guided by her foot, which is basest, doth tread. I shall be forswn, which is a great argument of falsehood, if I love. And how can that be true love which is falsely attempted ? Love is a familiar ; Love is a devil ; there is no evil angel but Love.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These paradoxes are found in Florio's *Second Frutes* (1591), in the 12th Dialogue, "Of Love, of Women," in which Pandolfo calls love "a right incarnate devil. . . Women are in churches saints, abroad angels, at home devils, at windows sirens, at doors pyes, in gardens goats." It is probable that Florio got some of his friends to contribute to the English side of his dialogues, for which he supplied the Italian. I suspect that his pupil Southampton was one of those, the Dormiglione of the 12th Dialogue. It has been made probable also, by the minute analysis of a competent critic the late Professor Minto, that Shakespeare wrote for "his friend John Florio" the commendatory sonnet signed Phaeton, which would thus be the earliest lyric verse that we have from his pen, the date being previous to the 30th April 1591. Although there is plenty of rhyme in the body of the book, there is nothing at all comparable with the exquisite diction of this exercise upon the name Florio :

Sweet friend, whose name agrees with thy increase,  
How fit a rival art thou of the Spring !  
For when each branch hath left his flourishing,  
And green-lockt Summer's shady pleasures cease,  
She makes the Winter's storms repose in peace  
And spends her franchise upon each living thing, etc.

When Florio published his next book, the *World of Wordes* (1598), he occupied much of his preface with an angry rejoinder to a certain H. S., who had attacked his *First Frutes*, "lighting upon a good sonnet of a friend of mine that loved better to be a poet than to be accounted one," and calling the author of it "a rhymer." It is inconceivable that any one should have attacked Phaeton's gentle verses. The sonnet referred to is a very different, and indeed coarse, thing, introduced at p. 131 of the body of the book, being a rhyming enumeration of the thirty parts of a perfect woman :

In choice of fair are thirty things required,  
For which (they say) fair Helen was admired :  
Three white, three black, three red, three short, three tall,  
Three thick, three thin, three straight, three wide, three small, etc.

The person who was attacked (if not imprisoned) for "a rhymer" was Gabriel Harvey, and the man who attacked him was Thomas Nash, the

## AS PAROLLES

The correspondence of Armado with the future Parolles will appear in general terms from the following :

Our court you know is haunted  
With a refined traveller of Spain ;  
A man in all the world's new fashion planted,  
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain ;  
One whom the music of his own vain tongue  
Doth ravish like enchanting harmony.

He was a child of fancy :

But, I protest, I love to hear him lie ;  
And I will use him for my minstrelsey.

This is just what Campion says of Barnes :

All wonders Barnzy speaks, all grossly feigned.  
Speak some wonder once, Barnzy : speak the truth.

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Parolles in ‘All’s Well that Ends Well’ is a far more complete portrait than Don Armado or Pistol ; he is Barnes seen in perspective from the beginning to the end of his career. He makes so large a part of the comedy, that he has been taken out from the story of Bertram and Helena in a French adaptation, and made the central figure in a play of three acts called *Paroles*. The date of ‘All’s Well’ is a problem so technical that I deal with it in a note at the end of the chapter. The conclusion is, that it was one of the later comedies, and that it must have been still unfinished about the time when ‘Cymbeline’ was under hand. Barnes died in

H. S. of Florio’s enigmatic reference (perhaps “silver-tongued H. Smith” of Nash’s own enigmatic reference in *Pierce Pennilesse*). Nash refers to some scandalous “game called rhyming” by Harvey, in his *Strange Newes* (1592), and again in his *Have with You* (1596) : “It was Thomas Watson the poet, a man that I dearly loved and honoured, and for all things hath left few his equals in England—he it was that, in the company of divers gentlemen one night at supper at the Nag’s Head in Cheape, first told me of his vanity, and these hexameters made of him :

But O what news of that good Gabriel Harvey,  
Known to the world for a fool and clapt in the Fleet for a rhymier ? ”

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the end of 1609, and it seems most probable that he was not exhibited upon the stage as Parolles until after his death.

The chief historical interest of Parolles is his remarkable influence over Count Bertram, whom I take to be Southampton, according to the evidence of identity given in a subsequent chapter. The evil influence of Parolles is of the very essence of the play ; it is he who induces the young count to go off to the wars and leave his newly-wedded wife. When his mother is told of it, she asks :

*Count.* Who was with him ?

*1st Gent.* A servant only, and a gentleman  
Which I have sometimes known.

*Count.* Parolles, was it not ?

*1st Gent.* Ay, my good lady, he.

*Count.* A very tainted fellow, and full of wickedness.  
My son corrupts a well-derived nature  
With his inducement.

The relations between the Count and his follower are not only intimate but effeminate. When Bertram comes in after his unwilling marriage to Helena, showing signs of his displeasure, Parolles asks : "What's the matter, sweet-heart?" and Bertram answers : "O, my Parolles, they have married me!" He believes in Parolles so firmly that the old lord Lafeu takes upon him to caution him ; his trust in his follower continues through the military campaign, and is not destroyed until two of his brother officers contrive a stratagem, by which Parolles is unmasked.

There is no external proof that Barnes was ever so mistaken by Southampton, or so deep in his lordship's confidence.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not that can be made probable

<sup>1</sup> In Drayton's eighth Eclogue (as rewritten) some one is referred to as "deceitful Cerberon" and as a "beastly clown," who had replaced him in the good graces of his patroness Selena, or the Countess of Bedford. As Cerberon has not been identified among the poets of the time, I venture to suggest that he was Barnes. The Countess of Bedford was one of the three patrons of Florio's *World of Wordes*, to whom "Il Candido" wrote the dedicatory sonnets, Southampton and Rutland being the other two.

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by internal evidence, in a round-about way, we must at the outset give up the search for a literal correspondence between the dramatic situation and the real. In the first place, Shakespeare allegorises when he makes Parolles the follower of Bertram in the wars. Barnes's only known military service was with the expedition of Essex in 1591, which Southampton was not allowed to accompany, being too young. It was as a poet, or man of letters, and a man of fashion in London, not as a "militarist," that Barnes was known to Lord Southampton. The change from literature to arms is carried out in the play almost completely; so that it is only through the discovery of certain verses in his pocket that we know Parolles to be a poet at all. This is the kind of dramatic artifice that might be expected by way of concealing the identities of parties, and is of the same kind as in 'Troilus and Cressida' on a larger scale. It ought not to weaken the probability that Parolles is Barnes and Bertram Southampton.

In this comedy his career is followed from beginning to end; but it is necessarily focussed into the narrow space of the dramatic action; and, by an equal necessity, the phases of it cannot always be taken in their order. We begin with his first poems, *Parthenophil and Parthenope* (1593). That is the meaning of the long discourse on Virginity (the root-idea of his Greek title) which Parolles drags in when he enters first, not without ironical fitness to the real situation of Helena, to whom it is addressed:

*Par.* Are you meditating on virginity?

*Hel.* Ay. You have some stain of soldier in you: let me ask you a question. Man is enemy to virginity; how may we barricade it against him?

The idea is just the feminine counterpart of Armado's in 'Love's Labour's Lost,' and a satire upon Barnes's doctrine, cited before, that in serving Mars he was "armed" against the attractions of Venus. Having thus brought up the topic, Parolles discourses upon it

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in a way which has no special relevancy to his own character, or to the subject-matter of *Parthenophil*; it is rather the kind of flippant talk which is elsewhere put into the mouth of the clown. In this play, also, the clown is given a speech which reproduces very closely the substance of Campion's epigram upon Barnes's married life, quoted below. The clown, *à propos* of nothing in the play, past or to come, asks leave of his mistress, the Countess, to get married. The Countess questions his reasons :

*Count.* Is this all your worship's reason ?

*Clo.* Faith, madam, I have other holy reasons, such as they are.

*Count.* May the world know them ?

*Clo.* I have been, madam, a wicked creature, as you and all flesh and blood are ; and indeed I do marry that I may repent.

*Count.* Thy marriage, sooner than thy wickedness.

*Clo.* I am out o' friends, madam ; and I hope to have friends for my wife's sake.

*Count.* Such friends are thine enemies, knave.

*Clo.* You're shallow, madam, in great friends : for the knaves come to do that for me which I am aweary of. He that ears my land spares my team and gives me leave to in the crop ; if I be his cuckold, he's my drudge ; he that comforts my wife is the cherisher of my flesh and blood ; he that loves my flesh and blood is my friend ; ergo, he that kisses my wife is my friend. If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no fear in marriage, etc.

This, according to Campion, was exactly the situation of Barnes :

But this Barnzy knows that his Matilda,  
Scorning him, with Harvey plays the wanton.  
Knows it ! Nay desires it, and by prayers  
Daily begs of heaven that it for ever  
May stand firm for him : yet he's no cuckold.  
And this is true ; for Harvey keeps Matilda,  
Fosters Barnzy and relieves his household,  
Buys the cradle and begets the children,  
Pays the nurses, every charge defraying.  
Another truly plays Matilda's husband ;  
So that Barnzy now becomes a cipher  
And himself the adulterer of Matilda.  
Mock not him with horns ; the case is altered—  
Harvey bears the wrong, he proves the cuckold.

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But Campion's epigram had been used also in another part of the play. When Helena has succeeded in forcing Bertram into a marriage, Parolles congratulates her ironically :

*Par.* Bless you, my fortunate lady !

*Hel.* I hope, sir, I have your good will to have mine own good fortunes.

*Par.* You had my prayers to lead them on ; and to keep them on have them still.

This is Campion's allegation that Barnes not only knew of Gabriel Harvey's relations with his wife, but desired the same, and made their continuance a matter of his daily prayers :

Knows it ! nay desires it, and by prayers  
Daily begs of heaven that it for ever  
May stand firm for him.

The piety of Parolles comes in twice besides. The old lord Lafeu, who had "found him" before any one else suspected him, brings him word of the marriage :

*Laf.* Sirrah, your lord and master's married ; there's news for you ; you have a new mistress.

*Par.* I most unfeignedly beseech your lordship to make some reservation of your wrongs : he is my good lord ; whom I serve above is my master.

*Laf.* Who ? God ?

*Par.* Ay, sir.

*Laf.* The devil it is that's thy master.

Bertram remonstrates against Lafeu's distrust of Parolles :

*Bert.* It may be you have mistaken him, my lord.

*Laf.* And shall do so ever, though I took him at his prayers.

One of the clearest proofs that Shakespeare meant Barnes to be Parolles is this same "smoking" of the latter by Lafeu :

*Laf.* I did think thee, for two ordinary, to be a pretty wise fellow : thou didst make tolerable vent of thy travel ; it might pass. . . . I have now found thee.

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Pistol, in ‘Henry V.’ is the same plausible person ; Fluellen was deceived in him for a time, but found him out after Gower had roused his suspicions. The early detection of Parolles by Lafeu is made much of in the play, reappearing at the close, where Parolles, reduced to begging, reminds him : “ You were the first that found me,” as a claim upon his charity. The meaning of all this is the interesting fact (for so we may take it) related by Nash, that Sir Philip Sidney was not long in seeing through the boy-poet :

As he was a natural cherisher of men of the least towardness in any art whatsoever, he held him in some regard ; and so did most men. But afterward, when his ambitious pride and vanity unmaskt itself so egregiously, both in his looks, his gait, his gestures and speeches, and he would do nothing but crake and parrot in print in how many noblemen’s favours he was, and blab every light speech they uttered to him in private, cockering and coying himself beyond imagination, then Sir Philip Sidney, by little and little, began to look askance on him, and not to care for him, though utterly shake him off he could not, he would so fawn and hang upon him.

Barnes could have been only a boy at the time, although a precocious one (as we know from himself), Sidney having died in 1586, the year in which Barnes went to Oxford. In the comedy, the person who first finds out Parolles is the old lord with the remarkable name, Lafeu. He corresponds with other honest old counsellors in Shakespeare’s plays—Le Beau, Escalus, and Gonzalo. The original of them all was Fulke Greville ; and the point in making him the detector of Parolles is, that he was Sidney’s most intimate friend from their school-days at Shrewsbury, and was in a manner the executor of his thoughts to a whole generation after his untimely death.

Among the other things mentioned of Barnes by Nash in the passage just quoted, the blabbing of noblemen’s light speeches is one of the chief things proved against Parolles in the central scene of ‘ All’s Well that

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'Ends Well,' where he is exposed at once for a coward, a braggart, a liar, and a blabber. On another point, his vanity in dress, Nash has related an incident, notorious at the time, which explains why Parolles is called a "red-tailed humble bee" (perhaps the same reference as that to Armado in the rhyme "the fox, the ape and the humble bee" in 'Love's Labour's Lost'): "Because he would be noted, getting him a strange pair of Babylonian britches [with a Gargantuan appendage], and so went up and down town, and showed himself in the presence at Court, where he was generally laughed at by the noblemen and ladies." Parolles was also a leader of the fashion. Lafeu, addressing the Countess : says : "No, no, no, your son was misled with a snipt-taffeta fellow there, whose villainous saffron would have made all the unbaked and doughy youth of a nation in his colour." Again, "the soul of this man is in his clothes," and his clothes became him well. One of the French lords declares : "I will never trust a man again for keeping his sword clean, nor believe he can have everything in him by wearing his apparel neatly." Helena also notes his plausible appearance. She loves him for Bertram's sake :

And yet I know him a notorious liar,  
Think him a great way fool, solely a coward ;  
Yet these fix'd evils so fit in him, etc.

Another clue to his identity is his being called a cat three times by Bertram, and by the clown thus : "Here is a purr of fortune's cat—but not a musk-cat." This recalls Nash's remarks pointed apparently at Barnes, on a passage quoted from Gabriel Harvey : "But some had rather be a Pole-cat with a stinking stew than a Musk-cat with a gracious favour." He corresponds also with one Musko, in Dekker's *Satiromastix* (1602), who cried "mew" at one of Ben Jonson's odes when it was read aloud at the ordinary : his wit was at pawn with his new satin suit and his cheeks were painted.

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Also Basilisco, the earliest portrait of Barnes on the stage, “wears civet ; and when it was asked him, where he had that musk ? he said all his kindred smelt so.” He went supperless to bed, and took physic, to make himself lean.

Parolles’ theoretical knowledge of the art of war recalls both Pistol and the poet-pimp Lodowick in ‘Edward III.’ It is clear that Barnes used to pose as an authority upon warfare after his return from the campaign of 1591 ; and in his treatise of 1606, upon the civil and military services of the State, he devoted the fourth book to the army. His work is a laborious compilation, not ill-digested, covering the ground systematically, and filled with many examples or precedents, especially from ancient times. But the fact that Barnes, being such as he was, should have essayed to write fifty folio pages upon military service, was a fair subject for satire ; and so Parolles is “the gallant *militarist*, that had the whole *theoric* of war in the knot of his scarf, and the practice in the chope of his dagger.” He is so much the soldier and man of fashion in the play, that one hardly thinks of him as a poet. But his gifts in that way are not overlooked altogether : for he is found with a remarkable sonnet in his pocket addressed to Diana. When Bertram hears it read out, he says : “He shall be whipped through the army with this rhyme in’s forehead.”

After he has been thoroughly exposed and given up by Bertram, he soliloquises like Pistol in ‘Henry V.’ :

*Par.* Yet I am thankful : if my heart were great,  
'Twould burst at this. Captain I'll be no more ;  
But I will eat and drink, and sleep as soft  
As captain shall : simply the thing I am  
Shall make me live. Who knows himself a braggart,  
Let him fear this ; for it will come to pass  
That every braggart shall be found an ass.  
Rust, sword ! cool, blushes ! and Parolles, live  
Safest in shame ! being fool'd, by foolery thrive !  
There's place and means for every man alive.

## SHAKESPEARE'S ASSISTANT

This was probably the situation of Barnabe Barnes for the greater part of his life in London. In the play his career has to be compressed into the space of the action ; so that Parolles appears in the last Act as already reduced to beggary—"fallen into the unclean fish-pond of Fortune's displeasure." He comes on with a begging letter for Lord Lafeu, which he hands to the clown with the remark, "I am now, sir, muddied in fortune's mood [probably his affected pronunciation], and smell somewhat strong of her strong displeasure." The clown pretends to smell him literally : "Prithee, allow the wind."

*Par.* Nay, you need not stop your nose, sir ; I speake but by metaphor.

*Clown.* Indeed, sir, if your metaphor stink, I will stop my nose.

The stinking metaphor is the notorious figure of speech in Barnes's Aquarius sonnet in his first volume of poems. This parting shaft of wit should suffice by itself to mark Parolles as Barnes.

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While there may be willingness to admit that one and the same real person stood for the portraits of Pistol, Don Armado, and Parolles, and that that person was Barnabe Barnes, it may seem improbable that Shakespeare ever employed him as his literary devil. The evidence, apart from that given at the beginning of this chapter, comes exclusively from 'Cymbeline,' and from only one or two places of it ; but if it mean anything at all, it should mean that Barnes was occupied at that time in making plots for Shakespeare, and perhaps drafting scenes for him to rewrite. That hypothesis might be used to explain the well-known presence of an inferior hand in the second scene of 'Macbeth,' where the bleeding sergeant delivers the news of Macbeth's victory in language which reminds one exactly of *Locrine* and of the three last Acts of 'Edward III.,' and is

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followed by the thane of Ross to describe the same event over again in the proper style of the rest of the play. The need of some such hypothesis is admitted by every one for ‘Pericles,’ and in a way for ‘Timon of Athens.’ I confine myself here to ‘Cymbeline,’ as to which there is some evidence through the tragedy published under the name of Barnes, *The Devil’s Charter*. This extraordinary play was produced before King James at Whitehall on Candlemas night, 2nd February 1607, “by his Majesty’s servants,” who were Shakespeare’s fellows at the Globe. It must have been in rehearsal at the Globe, and it is further brought near to Shakespeare in that it followed his own ‘King Lear’ on the Whitehall private stage at an interval of five weeks. It is hardly possible to conceive a greater contrast than between that highest flight of tragic genius and the medley of murders, incests, paederasties, and necromancies of which *The Devil’s Charter* consists. The name is taken from the bargain made between Roderigo Borgia, afterwards Pope Alexander VI., and the Devil to sell his soul for the reversion of the Holy See. King James was catholic enough in his tastes to tolerate both Lear and Borgia upon the same stage; while Shakespeare is sardonic enough in ‘King Lear’ to put up with anything and be surprised at nothing. It appears that he knew Barnes’s scene between the Borgia Pope and the Devil quite well; for there is introduced into ‘Cymbeline,’ Act V., a scene adapted to the pre-Christian period of that play, which is a farcical imitation of the scene with the Devil in the Vatican, down even to the anachronism of brimstone.

The apparitions around the sleeping Posthumus in the fifth Act of ‘Cymbeline’ have been a grief to all the poet’s admirers. Steevens went so far as to say that they were an interpolation by a later hand, forgetting that the oracle which Posthumus found pinned to his breast when he awoke was an essential part of the action. The joke begins with the name of Posthumus,

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the husband of Imogen. This name, a common one in ancient Rome, is found in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, as the name of the master of the camp of the Second Legion in the wars of Boadicea. It is brought into *Locrine* in the form of Posthumius, in the same context with Imogen (or Innogen) herself, being carried backwards into the legendary period of Brutus, first King of Britain in descent from the Trojan fugitives. Barnes knew that the proper name Posthumus might mean, and probably did originally mean, a posthumous child. This fancy had a great attraction for him, so that he drags it into *The Devil's Charter* as if by force. In Act IV. Scene iv. Cæsar Borgia is about to put to death the two boys of the Countess Katharine; one of the children exclaims, "Let me before I die but kiss my mother," using the same "before I die" that was carefully constructed to be the "cue for the band" on Mr. Crummles's stage at Portsmouth. It is here the cue for the little joke about "posthumous," for the Countess answers with strained pathos :

What ! would'st thou run again into my womb ?  
If thou wert there, thou should'st be Posthumus,  
And ript out of my sides with soldiers' swords,  
Before I would yield up thine heritage.

Barnes's cherished morsel of wit reappears in 'Cymbeline,' in the opening scene. Of the father of the hero it is said :

He served with glory and admired success,  
So gain'd he the sur-addition Leonatus :  
And had, besides this gentleman in question,  
Two other sons, who in the wars o' the time  
Died with their swords in hand : for which their father,  
Then old and fond of issue, took such sorrow  
That he quit being, and his gentle lady,  
Big of this gentleman our theme, deceased  
As he was born. The king, he takes the babe  
To his protection, calls him Posthumus Leonatus, etc.

Although nothing follows from Posthumus having

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been a posthumous child, yet this small piece of wit turns up again in the prison scene of the Fifth Act with much solemnity and circumstance. The ghost of Posthumus' father appears, “*an old man attired like a warrior, leading in his hand an ancient matron, his wife, and mother to Posthumus, with music before them: then, after other music, follow the two young Leonati, brothers to Posthumus, with wounds as they died in the wars. They circle Posthumus round as he lies sleeping.*” Then follow jingling verses, in the simple style of the old mummeries. The old father says of Posthumus :

I died whilst in the womb he stay'd  
Attending nature's law, etc.

The aged mother :

Lucina lent me not her aid,  
But took me in my throwes ;  
That from me was Posthumus ript,  
Came crying 'mongst his foes.  
A thing of pity !—

and so on, for eight more verses, the boys joining in the jingle like ghostly mummers. Next comes another elaborate stage direction : “*Jupiter descends in thunder and lightning sitting upon an eagle; he throws a thunderbolt; the Ghosts fall on their knees.*” Jupiter then delivers twenty-one lines of mock sublime verbiage and reascends ; whereupon the old father says :

Sicil. He came in thunder ; his celestial breath  
Was sulphurous to smell ; the holy eagle  
Stoop'd as to foot us ; his ascension is  
More sweet than our blest fields ; his royal bird  
Prunes the immortal wing and cloys his beak  
As when his god is pleased.  
All. Thanks, Jupiter !

The descent of Jupiter is obviously burlesqued to take off the apparition of the Devil to the Pope in Barnes's tragedy : “*Fiery exhalations : lightning and thunder : ascend a king with a red face, crowned imperial, riding*

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*upon a lyon or dragon.*" Next, "he descends with thunder and lightning, and after more exhalations ascends another, all in armour." And finally, "he descendeth with thunder." The copy is so close that Jupiter's "celestial breath was sulphurous to smell," although sulphur is not an Olympian property. Another part of Barnes's scene between the Devil and the Pope is : "He [the Devil] bringeth from the same door Gismond Viselli, his wounds gaping, and after him Lucrece [Lucrezia Borgia] undrest, holding a dagger fixed in his bleeding bosom. They vanish." This is the source of "with wounds as they died in the wars," said of the ghosts of the two young brothers of Posthumus. The probable explanation of the mock-sublime and burlesque in this scene is, that Shakespeare found these apparitions in the draft of the play which had been prepared for him by his "plotter," and that he let them stand, giving them a ludicrous turn, because they were incapable of being made truly pathetic. I conjecture that it was the same plotter who invented the apparitions in 'Macbeth,' Act IV. Scene i.: the armed head, the bloody child, the child crowned, with a tree in his hand, the show of eight kings, the last with a glass in his hand, and Banquo's ghost following. But in that instance the author has done everything that language can do to dignify the spectacular conceits of his assistant.

It will be observed that Barnes is singular in the affectation "descendeth," "bringeth," etc., which is found also in some of the stage-directions of *Locrine*, *Musedorus*, and the old *King Leir*. It is found also in the fifth Act of 'Cymbeline': "He vanquisheth and disarmeth Iachimo, and then leaves him." This is some other hand than Shakespeare's. There are, moreover, some other signs of collaboration in 'Cymbeline.' The story of the wager upon Imogen's chastity, and the artifice of the chest in her bedroom, are taken from Boccaccio's 'Bernabo Lomelin,' the ninth tale of the second day of the

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*Decamerone*, the scene of the wager being changed from Paris to Rome to suit the Roman-British period of the play. There was no English translation of that tale then published. Douce guesses that Shakespeare may have “heard the novel read by some person in English,” or, as an alternative, that he read it in the French version. Barnes must have had some knowledge of languages to have written *The Devil's Charter*, although he was no more a “linguist” than he was a “militarist”; but he was a friend of the Italian John Florio, and may have got his help. It is necessary to carry the hypothesis of his collaboration even farther. About the date of ‘Cymbeline,’ some one, either Shakespeare himself or an assistant, had been reading discursively in Holinshed's *Chronicles*. The stories of King Lear and of Macbeth are found therein; and in the midst of the latter (pp. 155-56 of the *Chronicle of Scotland*) is found the incident of the man and his sons, the Hays, keeping the end of a barricaded lane, which comes into the battle in the last Act of ‘Cymbeline.’ Not only is the stage-direction “he vanquisheth and disarmeth” Barnsian, but also some of the text; for example, these lines, which might have come from *The Devil's Charter*:

Athwart the lane,  
He, with two striplings—lads more like to run  
The country base than to commit such slaughter :  
With faces fit for masks, or rather fairer  
Than those for preservation cased, or shame,—  
Made good the passage.

I suspect, also, that the idea of the cave at Milford Haven came from Barnes, and that we should have found the original of it in his lost tragedy *The Battle of Hexham*, in the part relating to the fugitives in Cumberland and Yorkshire after the battle. The part of Imogen is held to be one of Shakespeare's highest flights in the delineation of women; but there is much else in the play which is not of the same quality.

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The hypothesis would be that he worked over a draft by Barnes, keeping lines or passages here and there which he had not the patience to alter, turning Barnes into ridicule in the apparitions-scene in the fifth Act (as he did in other plays designed by him), but giving his own impress to so much of the play that it counts justly among the greatest of his works. A similar theory has been adopted by the late Mr. W. G. Clark and Dr. Aldis Wright for the composition of 'Macbeth': that "Shakespeare reserved to himself all the scenes in which Macbeth or Lady Macbeth appeared, and left the rest to his assistant. We must further suppose that he largely retouched, and even rewrote in places, this assistant's work." It is this assistant whom I identify with Barnes, the author of *Locrine* and the original of Pistol and Parolles.

### NOTE ON THE DATE OF 'ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL'

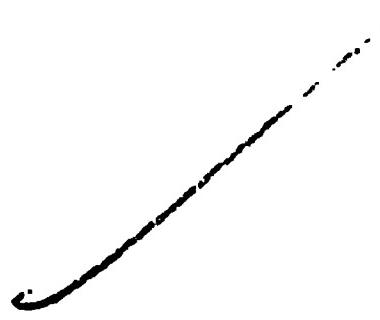
Everything is conjectural, as nothing is heard of the play until the folio of 1623; yet it was certainly acted, as the clown in one place is addressed Monsieur Levatch, *la Vache*, the actor Cowley, whose names occur in the list of King's players, May 1603. Several proper names occur in the text, which point to a date not earlier than about 1602-3, and probably not much later for the first draft of the play. These are Escalus (1604), Corambus (1602), the Muskos' regiment, the regiment of the Spinii. "Musko the Gull" occurs in *Satiromastix* (1602); the Spinii are the satirists, from *spina*, a thorn, according to Ben Jonson's heraldry for Marston in *The Poetaster* (1601). The use of Campion's Epigrams (1602), is another proof. The references to Dumaine are specially suggestive, but they do not imply a date necessarily later than 1598. Coleridge, Tieck, Verplanck, and others have detected two periods of composition, but they are not agreed among themselves which are the earlier and which the later portions. There is some evidence that 'Cymbeline' and 'All's Well' were under hand about the same time. A motive discarded from the Boccaccio story of the latter is utilised for the former, just as the sailless and rudderless boat of Greene's *Pandosto* is discarded from 'Winter's Tale' but used for 'The Tempest.' The motive I refer to is the intimacy between Beltramo and Giletta (Helena) as boy and girl, so that they became lovers inevitably; this is dropped in 'All's Well,' but is taken up and expanded in 'Cymbeline,' where

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Posthumus and Imogen had been bred up together from childhood. Imogen says (I. i. 145) :

It is your fault that I have loved Posthumus :  
You bred him as my playfellow, and he is  
A man worth any woman, overbuys me  
Almost the sum he pays.

The Countess of Rousillon says very nearly the same of Helena : “Her father bequeathed her to me . . . there is more owing to her than is paid ; and more shall be paid her than she’ll demand.” Other points in common between the two plays are the likeness of Cloten to Parolles ; and a peculiar use of the word “scarre” in the sense of knot, a dialect word still in use among sailors or fishermen both as a noun and a verb, and evidently a form of scarve or scarfe, meaning to splice : in Scotland it is sounded “scaire.” ‘Cymbeline’ is one of the last group of plays ; and so I should take ‘All’s Well that End’s Well’ to be. If the critics are right in detecting two periods of writing in it, I should place the first about 1602-4, and the second about 1609-10. In view of the grim humour of it, it is not easy to understand how it should have ever been dated before 1598, as those date it who identify it with the comedy called ‘Love’s Labour’s Won,’ in Meres’s list of that year (see p. 143).



## CHAPTER VII

### SOUTHAMPTON AS A SUCCESSFUL POET

IN 'The Tempest' Antonio must have had the ability to "execute the outward face of royalty" as Prospero's substitute, or he could not have "played his part" with success. In the hypothesis of Southampton, as the "ivy which had hid my princely trunk," or "the screen" between Shakespeare and the public, he must have had both ability and ambition to be an author, or he is not the original of Antonio and there is no literary allegory in the story of political usurpation. It is indeed implied that Antonio, when he "expelled remorse and nature," was conscious of some right, otherwise his conduct would not have been called pitiless, as if he were exacting no more than was his due. It is not so difficult to show that Southampton had the ability, and that he was gifted specially with imagination. In a dedication to him in 1594 Nash calls him "a dear lover and cherisher as well of the lovers of poets as of the poets themselves. Incomprehensible is the height of your spirit, both in heroical resolution and matters of conceit." About the same date his romantic bearing during one of the Queen's progresses led to his being compared with the famous paladin Sir Bevis of Hampton. In a letter of the same year his "fantastical" disposition is given as a reason why the Lady Bridget Manners, sister of his dearest friend Lord Rutland, was unwilling to entertain the project of a marriage with him. Florio, who was his tutor in Italian and had lived

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in his "pay and patronage some years," addressing him in the dedication of his *World of Wordes* (1598), is very explicit. He specifies "your studies, your conceits, your exercise: your studies, much in all, most in Italian excellence; your conceits, by understanding others, *to work above them in your own*; your exercise, to read what the world's best wits have written and to speak as they write." Gifted with imagination, it would have been nothing unusual in that age if he had actually turned poet, as Surrey, Sidney, Dyer, Sackville, Greville, Raleigh had done. But there is not a scrap of verse with Southampton's name. The only known production of his pen is his college Latin essay written when he was thirteen, which is said to be of excellent penmanship, and does not suggest poetic ideals by its theme—that all men are incited to the study of virtue by the hope of reward.

Yet it is morally certain that Southampton was the anonymous author of a very successful poem, which went through six editions between 1594 and 1631. This was the work, not unknown to Shakespearian students, called *Willolie his Avisa*. It is made quite clear by the prefaces to the first and second editions that the ascription of it to one Henry Willolie was an elaborate joke; it was indeed referred to, in a work of 1596, as "a pamphlet by an unknown author," or by one who desired to be unknown. The authorship was probably an open secret, and by internal evidence alone it is not difficult to bring it home to Southampton with a high degree of certainty. Not only the novelty of this proof, but also the radical importance of it for the hypothesis that Shakespeare's patron had been his collaborator in certain of the plays, makes it incumbent upon me to be more particular than I could wish to be for the reader's sake. First it will be shown that the poem grew out of 'The Rape of Lucrece,' published a few months before, and that one W. S., admitted to be Shakespeare, was the author's "familiar" and "faithful"

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friend and adviser. Next, the localities will be identified in a certain part of Lord Southampton's county, Hampshire, and the heroine, Avisa, identified as the barmaid of one inn and the hostess of another. Besides the pointed and unmistakable introduction of W. S., there are three other persons introduced who can be shown to correspond with certain of his lordship's *protégés* or friends, the clearest case being Roger Earl of Rutland, who is identified with Rogero by one piece of wit in the text and another on the margin.

The success of *Willobie his Avisa* was so considerable, its vogue lasting for more than a generation, that we naturally ask what it was due to. Probably not solely to its merits, although these are not to be denied. The mystification about the authorship, which is made the most of in two prefaces, or the open secret of the authorship in some circles, may account in part for its numerous editions. A dexterous wit, and a suspicion of irony or playful satire, together with a total absence of fine writing or straining at effect, are its real merits. But, except in two or three cantos near the beginning, which were probably Shakespeare's, it is never sensuous and impassioned, but always analytical and reasoned. The rhymes are often forced, and in some stanzas doggerel unashamed. The structure is so haphazard that the theme is exhausted in the first twenty-two cantos, and has to begin again upon a new tack. The moral of the barmaid's or landlady's indomitable chastity keeps its interest, and a certain degree of humour, by varying the circumstances, but it has no dramatic climax. At the same time the idea of the poem is original and unconventional ; so much so that Heywood paid it the compliment of borrowing it with little disguise for the initial plot of one of his best-known plays, *The Fair Maid of the West* (Part I.).

Shakespeare's name is introduced into the poem at the very outset ; this is indeed the first mention of it by a contemporary, and is therefore well known :

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Though Collatine have dearly bought  
To high renown a lasting life,  
And found—that most in vain have sought  
To have—a fair and constant wife ;  
Yet Tarquin pluckt his glistening grape,  
And Shake-speare paints poor Lucrece rape.

The intention is not to compliment the author of ‘Lucrece,’ but to connect the one poem with the other. Avisa is an English heroine of more than Roman virtue, or at all events of more effectual virtue than the heroine of classical antiquity. The obvious intention of the poem is to be a skit upon Shakespeare’s tragic piece. The satirical humour of it is so marked that it was included in an order of the year 1599 by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London against the satires of the day, but with the difference that *Willowie’s Avisa* was only “to be called in,” while the others were to be burned. Avisa is assailed first in her country bar-parlour by a young nobleman, whom she repels with the good-nature of a ready-witted barmaid, but with such spirit that she threatens at length to stick a knife into him. The nobleman, *furens*, forgets his nobility and breaks out in a torrent of abuse upon her humble station. Then begins the Second Temptation of Avisa, after her marriage, by ruffians, roysterers, young gentlemen, and lusty captains, “which all she quickly casts off.” She is now the landlady of a hostelry in a busy town, where her far-famed beauty attracts many. It is again the nobleman who leads the attack, under the new character of an Italian cavalier. He is followed by a pious Frenchman, who carries on his suit through eleven cantos. To him succeeds an Anglo-German pedant in ten cantos. Then the nobleman reappears for the second time, as a combination of Italian and Spaniard, but at the same time expressly identified with the author himself under his initials H. W. Before the last assault on Avisa begins, at Canto 44, the author pauses in the midst of his verse to introduce a prose

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passage, in which he relates the inception, progress, and conclusion of his task under the medical allegory of an attack of the infection or plague.

The plague had been the common topic in London during the two preceding years. It was so prevalent in the capital from the summer of 1592 until the winter of 1593 that the theatres were closed all that long period but for a short season of six weeks at and after Christmas 1592 ; we know this on the excellent authority of the diary of Philip Henslowe, who was the proprietor of one or more playhouses.

It was in that enforced vacation that Shakespeare wrote his ‘Venus and Adonis,’ dedicating it in the spring of 1593 to Lord Southampton, and promising his lordship “to take advantage of all idle hours till I have honoured you with some graver labour”—a promise which he fulfilled with ‘Lucrece’ in the spring of 1594. *Willowie his Avisa* followed in the autumn of the same year ; so that it was either written in haste or the author knew enough of Shakespeare’s poem before it was published to have conceived the project of a mild satire upon the same theme. The history of its composition is thus given by the author in his allegorical way :—

H. W. being suddenly affected with the contagion of a fantastical fit at the first sight of A. [Avisa], pineth a while in secret grief ; at length not able any longer to endure the burning heat of so fervent a humour, bewrayeth the secrecy of his disease unto his familiar friend W. S., who not long before had tried the courtesy of the like passion, and was now newly recovered of the infection. Yet, finding his friend let blood in the same vein, he [W. S.] took pleasure for a time to see him bleed, and instead of stopping the issue he enlargeth the wound with the sharp razor of a willing conceit, persuading him that he thought it a matter very easy to be compassed, and no doubt with pain, diligence and some cost, in time to be obtained. Thus this miserable comforter comforting his friend with an impossibility ; either for that he now would secretly laugh at his friend’s folly that had given occasion not long

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before unto others to laugh at his own, or because he would see whether another could play his part better than himself, and in viewing afar off the course of this loving comedy he determined to see whether it would sort to a happier end for this new actor than it did for the old player. But at length this comedy was like to have grown to a tragedy by the weak and feeble estate that H. W. was brought unto by a desperate view of an impossibility of obtaining his purpose ; till Time and Necessity, being his best physicians, brought him a plaster, if not to heal, yet in part to ease his malady. In all which discourse is lively represented the unruly rage of unbridled fancy, having the reins to rove at liberty ; with the divers and sundry changes of affections and temptations, which Will, set loose from Reason, can devise, etc.

In this apologue the relations of parties are exactly those that would have subsisted between Shakespeare, or W. S., and his young patron, H. W., Henry Wriothesley, Lord Southampton. The latter ostensibly calls in his familiar and faithful friend in order to help him in his suit to Avisa, the two cantos, 47 and 49, being the advice of W. S., and headed with these initials. There is no reason to suppose that Shakespeare wrote them ; but there is a poem of his, No. 19 of the minor poems from ‘The Passionate Pilgrim’ (1599), which is upon the same theme (as well as in the same stanza and metre), beginning—

Whenas thine eye hath chosen the dame  
And stall'd the deer that thou should'st strike,  
Let Reason rule things worthy blame  
As well as Fancy, partial wight.  
Take counsel of some wiser head,  
Neither too young, nor yet unwed.

It is not likely that these verses were ever meant for publication; some one must have given them to Jaggard, the publisher, along with various other surreptitiously obtained things, including two of the Sonnets, which are the most compromising to Shakespeare’s reputation and were almost certainly meant to damage it at the time they were printed. It is known also that Nash,

## ADVISED BY SHAKESPEARE

who had been on a visit to Lord Southampton (perhaps in Hampshire during the plague in London), wrote for him in the same year (1594) a poem on the same theme, *The Choosing of Valentines*, which has been prudently left unpublished (all but a few harmless lines extracted by Grosart). It will be observed that Shakespeare's opening stanza upon Reason controlling Fancy is exactly the converse of the theme with which H. W. concludes his prose passage—"the unruly rage of unbridled fancy," or "Will set loose from Reason"; and that is also an underlying idea or moral of the whole poem.

So far as concerns the actual pursuit of Avisa, the counsel of W. S. is of little moment. It is in the allegory of the "fantastical fit" of contagion that his skill and experience are enlarged upon; and there, it is clear, his advice is sought and given as the writer of love-poems by which H. W. had been "infected," the author who had lately made his mark with 'Venus and Adonis' and 'The Rape of Lucrece.' It is humorously implied, no doubt, that W. S. had been himself a gay dog, that he was an old hand at love affairs; and the soft impeachment is admitted in the "wiser head, neither too young nor yet unwed," of Shakespeare's own verses. But H. W.'s account of his familiar friend is clearly meant as banter; the addiction of a sober and thoughtful man to Ovidian subjects was a fair subject for a jest, and was even thrown at him in earnest, as in the lines in *The Return from Parnassus*:

Could but a graver subject him content,  
Without love's foolish, lazy languishment !

Drayton also aims a pleasantry of the same kind at some one who must have been recognised. The shepherd Rowland is relating to a group of shepherds (or poets) the tale of the Man in the Moon; that

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personage, with his lanthorn, looked into many dark corners of the earth,

“And not long since, besides this, did behold  
Some of you here, when you should tend your fold  
A’ nights, were wenching : thus he doth me tell.”  
With that they all in such a laughter fell  
That the field rang.

H. W.’s humour is all the better if it be not taken as wholly allegorical; but of course it would have been neither witty nor decent to publish as matter of fact, or literally, that W. S. had “lately tried the courtesy of the like passion,” that he had not long before given occasion to laugh at his “folly,” and that the “old player” had come off indifferently well in some “loving comedy.” The medical figures of speech leave no doubt as to the literary nature of the escapade. H. W.’s attack of the contagion was a “fantastical fit,” or a fit of fancy. W. S. when called in, found him already the subject of phlebotomy ; instead of stopping the flow, he let him bleed, and even enlarged the opening in the vein “with the sharp razor of a willing conceit.” The malady was at length eased, if not cured, by the application of a plaster, which is a not inapt figure for the flat ending of the poem. The meaning of this humorous parable is, that Southampton began the poem on his own initiative, and that Shakespeare, when told of it, encouraged him in it, and gave him some advice, but left him for the most part to his own resources. If I can trust my diagnosis in such a matter, Shakespeare wrote the whole of certain cantos near the beginning, but none after the 13th. Canto 3, which is Avisa’s spirited rejoinder to the first assault of the young nobleman, is altogether superior in style to the two that precede and the two that follow it. The same abler pen strikes one in Canto 6, which is this time the nobleman’s address ; and one seems to find traces of it in the three in succession, 11 to 13, which describe his rage at being repulsed, and Avisa’s

## ‘AVISA’ A MYSTIFICATION

gentle firmness with him. The only other parts of the poem in which one may suspect Shakespeare’s co-operation are the sections given to the pious Frenchman, who justifies himself by the precedents of David and Solomon, and to the pedantic German, who cites the authority of the ancients in favour of conjugal infidelity at large ; and these, I should suppose, had been the occasion of a good deal of fun between the two friends, especially in respect to the real persons taken off (Barnabe Barnes and Gabriel Harvey).

The ascription of *Avisa* to one Henry Willobie ✓ is so obviously a mystification, that one might well be spared the demonstration of the joke. But as every one in our time appears to have taken it seriously, and the *Dictionary of National Biography* has devoted an article to “Willoughby, or Willobie, Henry (1574?-1596?), the eponymous hero of the poem *Willobie’s Avisa*,” I have no choice but to analyse this pleasantry with due solemnity. The alleged eponymous hero was the second son of Henry Willoughby, a Wiltshire gentleman, by Jane, daughter of —— Dauntrey, Esquire, of Lavington, Wiltshire. The pedigree has been the subject of industrious research by several. This Willoughby, or “Willabie,” matriculated from St. John’s College, Oxford, on 10th December 1591, at the age of sixteen, and proceeded B.A. from Exeter College on 28th February 1595. On the other hand, the author (also the “eponymous hero”) of *Avisa* had gone abroad upon the Queen’s service previous to the 1st October 1594, according to the statement of his chamber-fellow “Hadrian Dorrell,” writing from Oxford on that date. Young Willobie, it appears, was a “scholar of a very good hope,” but having a desire to see foreign countries, he had gone abroad, leaving certain papers in the hands of his friend. *Avisa* was in his own handwriting, and was thought probably to be his own composition ; Dorrell had ventured to print it, but he was not sure how Willobie would “take this boldness both in the

## SOUTHAMPTON AS A SUCCESSFUL POET

publishing and naming of it." Before the second edition, Willobie was fortunately dead, so that those who had been raising inconvenient questions "must rest until the Author, now of late gone to God, return from Heaven to satisfie them farder touching his meaning. And so farewell. Oxford, this 30 of June 1596. Thine to use. HADRIAN DORRELL." In another part of the second edition it is stated with equal biographical impressiveness : "This poetical fiction was penned by the Author at least for thirty and five years since (as it will be proved), and lay in waste papers in his study, as many other pretty things did of his devising." One of these was a poem upon the cognate theme of Susanna and the Elders, to which the author refers in the following remarkable stanza of his introductory canto :

Then Avis-Susan join in one ;  
Let Lucrece-Avis be thy name :  
The English Eagle soars alone  
And far surmounts all other fame.  
Wh'er high or low, wh'er great or small,  
This Britain Bird outflies them all.

Perhaps enough has been said to show the high spirits in which *Willobie his Avisa* was conceived and executed ; and I shall pass to the real localities and persons of it, with one more citation from the *Dictionary of National Biography* : "The frivolous tone in which W. S. is made in *Avisa* to refer [?] to his recent amorous adventure suggests, moreover, that the professed tone of pain which characterises the poet's addresses to a disdainful mistress, in his Sonnets, is not to be interpreted quite seriously."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For example, S. 148 :

O me ! what eyes hath love put in my head,  
Which have no correspondence with true sight ?  
Or, if they have, where is my judgement fled,  
That censures falsely what they see aright ?  
. . . O how can love's eye be true  
That is so vex'd with watching and with tears ?  
No marvel, then, though I mistake my view ;  
The sun itself sees not till heaven clears.

## 'AVISA' ANONYMOUS

Let us now see what was said of *Willolie his Avisa* in the first year or two after its publication. The book itself had given, in a preface, a plain hint to look below the surface for real persons and real places. Attention is called to "the exact description" of Avisa's birth-place, "her country, the place of her abode, and such other circumstances. . . . We think it is a matter almost impossible, that any man could invent all this without some ground or foundation to build on. . . . Though the matter be handled poetically, yet there is something under these feigned names and shows that have done truly." It appears from the Apology prefixed to the second edition that readers had not been slow to follow this hint, although it is now expedient to repudiate the result:—"These fancies, forsooth, have framed names to letters, of their own devices; and they have imagined places of their own placing so fitly for every description that they shall needs enforce the author to speak of them whom he never knew, to aim at their fancies whose faces he never saw, and to cipher their names whose natures to him were ignorant and strange." But "they must for ever rest in their rightless erring till the Author (now of late gone to God) return from Heaven," etc.—by which irony the mystification is of course confessed. Therefore, in a work of the year 1596, just before the second edition of *Avisa*, that poem was said to be by "an unknown author," or, in other words, the name of Henry Willolie was fictitious, concealing an identity which was probably known, but was publicly spoken of as unknown according to the etiquette of such matters. This statement came from Peter Coles, a young scholar from Dorsetshire, who had been engaged in translating and paraphrasing into English verse all the passages in the *Odyssey* relating to Penelope and the suitors. He took advantage of the lead given him by *Avisa*, just as *Avisa* had followed the lead of 'Lucrece,' either to write his Homeric paraphrases or to get them brought out; and,

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✓ by way of recommendation, he got his very dear friend S. D. to write a copy of Latin verses, in which Penelope is contrasted with Avisa, greatly to the advantage of the former. One may take it that S. D. was the well-known scholar and poet Samuel Daniel, who came from near Taunton, was a likely person to have befriended the young Dorset scholar in London, and may have helped him to proceed at length to Oxford, where he matriculated three years after, at the mature age of twenty-six.<sup>1</sup>

S. D.'s testimony about Avisa, presumably from personal knowledge, is that she was an obscure person born in an obscure place, that she was a daughter of the tavern and became the wife of an innkeeper (*conjugx cauponis, filia pandochei*), that she was by no means so diligent as the illustrious Penelope at her distaff, and that she would probably not have held out as many days against her suitors as Penelope withstood them for years. As to Avisa's upbringing at one public-house and her married life at another, S. D. does but confirm what we may infer from the poem itself. In her married station she lived at a house which bore "the sign of England's saint"—the George and Dragon—in a busy town at a stirring time: as one of her suitors bluntly told her,

The time and place will not permit  
That you can long here spotless sit.

Before her marriage she had been living in the country exposed to the public gaze in like manner:

And there she dwells in public eye,  
Shut up from none that list to see :  
She answers all that list to try,  
Both high and low of each degree.  
But few that come but feel her dart,  
And try her well ere they depart.

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<sup>1</sup> The editor of *Avisa* in our time, Dr. Grosart, was "morally certain" that S. D. was *not* Samuel Daniel; but he gives no reasons against, and does not suggest who else S. D. could have been. In the Oxford lists there are only three others with those initials who are early enough for the date, 1596; but these are all otherwise unknown and unlikely names. Commendatory verses would have been of no use unless their author were somebody.

## KNOWN BY HIS HEROINE

When this maid of the inn was married the rumour soon spread that "beauty's wonder" had come "from country hills in towns to dwell." S. D.'s contrast of her with Penelope was literally adopted by the poem itself, in a supplementary canto by "Thomas Willoby, *frater Henrici Willoby nuper defuncti*" :

Penelope sprang from noble house,  
By noble match twice noble made :  
Avisa both by sire and spouse  
Was link'd to men of meanest trade.

She was a real person, who bore the pretty English name of Avis. In turning it into Avisa the author playfully suggests that it was derived from a privative, and *visa* seen—"never was such a woman seen as here is described." Another suggestion is *avis*, a bird, more particularly the bird of St. John the Evangelist; while the two etymologies, and perhaps name and surname, are combined in "our Not-seene Bird."

The author's "exact description" of localities enables us to fix the scene, or scenes, in which his real barmaid or hostess lived and moved. First the place and circumstances of her birth are described :

At western side of Albion's isle  
Where Austin pitcht his monkish tent,  
Where Shepherds sing, where Muses smile,  
The Graces met with one consent  
To frame each one in sundry part  
Some cunning work to shew their art.

This is puzzling at first sight to a modern reader, because, in strict history, St. Austin pitched his "monkish" tent nowhere but in Kent. However, it was long believed, and is even stated in authoritative works still current, that he founded also Glastonbury in the west. Somerset is a county that may be said to be on the due western side of the island—neither southwest nor north-west, as we now divide the regions from Greenwich; and Glastonbury, as Dr. Ingleby has

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perceived, is the place that suits the particulars in the text best.<sup>1</sup> However, it matters nothing where Avisa was born. We move at once away from her western birthplace towards the place, at some little distance, where she was living when she first encountered the young nobleman :

Not far from thence there lies a vale,  
A rosy vale in pleasant plain ;  
The Nymphs frequent this happy dale,  
Old Helicon revives again.  
Here Muses sing, here Satyrs play,  
Here mirth resounds both night and day.

This is only a stage on the way to Avisa's dwelling-place ; but, meanwhile, what is meant by bringing in this rosy vale, the haunt of nymphs and satyrs, the seat of the Muses, the English Helicon ? It happened that there had been published just a year before, in 1593, Michael Drayton's *Nine Eclogues*, the sixth of which is occupied mainly with an extravagant eulogy of sixteen stanzas (afterwards cut down to three, and moderated in tone) upon the Countess of Pembroke, who is declared to have inherited "the secret of his skill" from her more famous brother, Sir Philip Sidney, and is pictured as living in that Arcadia which he had created for her—"the glorious light and lodestar of our West." Then comes a very strained compliment :

The flood of Helicon forspent and dry,  
Her source decay'd with foul oblivion,  
The fountain flows again in thee alone,  
Where Muses now their thirst may satisfy ;  
And old Apollo, from Parnassus hill,  
May in this spring refresh his droughty quill.

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<sup>1</sup> In Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*, which is based closely upon *Avisa*, the heroine's well-born lover is remonstrated with by his friend :

Come, I must tell you, you forget yourself :  
One of your birth and breeding thus to dote  
Upon a tanner's daughter ! Why, her father  
Sold hides in Somersetshire, and being trade-fallen  
Sent her to service [in an inn at Plymouth].

## HAMPSHIRE SCENES

This extravagance could hardly have passed without remark, and was almost certainly the occasion of H. W.'s line, "Old Helicon revives again," and of his other Arcadian imagery. The rosy vale in pleasant plain was therefore Wilton, which is not incorrectly described by the phrase. But we are not yet come to Avisa's home ; Wilton is only a place in its vicinity, singled out for remark both because it is in the direct line and because all the world knew this modern Arcady. Avisa's home is a little farther east :

At east of this a castle stands,  
By ancient Shepherds built of old,  
And lately was in Shepherds' hands,  
Though now by brothers bought and sold.

By shepherds he means bishops, as in the phrase, "shepherd and bishop of our souls," therefore an ancient ecclesiastical castle, lately alienated from the Church, "bought and sold" by certain brothers.

This is a very precise account ; there cannot have been many castles of churchmen in the west country or in Hampshire answering to these particulars ; so far as I can find there was only one, namely Merdon, an ancient castle and manor of the Bishops of Winchester, some twenty miles to the east of Wilton (the manor being better known as the parish of Hursley, of which Keble was vicar). Its alienation from the see of Winchester after the Reformation was a somewhat celebrated instance. In 1551, Sir Philip Hoby, an adroit statesman, obtained the grant of it from Edward VI., with the connivance of the then bishop Poinet. But he did not enter at once into possession, and meanwhile Queen Mary came to the throne, and restored Bishop Gardiner to his see, who in 1554 declared the alienation of Merdon to be null. Sir Philip Hoby, however, became loyal to Queen Mary as he had been to her Protestant predecessor, and succeeded in recapturing Merdon, which was confirmed to him by statute on the 9th of

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May 1558. He died three weeks after ; and it needed another statute, of the 1st of Elizabeth (1559) to renew and confirm the grant to his half-brother, William Hoby, who entered into possession. Whether these brothers “bought” this church property by some bribe, or bribes, cannot of course be proved ; but it is known that grants of the kind were not always made out of pure favour, or without some consideration ; and in this case so many obstacles were thrown in the way of the alienation, that it must have needed some money to overcome them. William Hoby occupied the habitable wing of the old castle of Merdon until the new mansion, Hursley Lodge (long the residence of Richard Cromwell, ex-Protector) was built. He was succeeded by his son Giles, who sold the castle and manor to his father-in-law, Sir Thomas Clarke, a Berkshire knight who is supposed to have been in occupation of the half-ruinous edifice in 1602. The somewhat remarkable history of this old castle of the Bishops of Winchester suits the details in the poem well enough, including the curious fact that it was “by brothers bought and sold” ; and no other castle of that locality, or of the west generally, seems to suit them at all. One other detail suits Merdon Castle—a famous well, said to be deeper than that of Carisbrooke. It is still in existence, being situated in what would have been the old courtyard of the castle ; only one piece of ruin remains, on the north of the well, while a grass-grown mound of fallen walls bounds the central area on the east. The well is therefore on the western side of the ruin as it can still be traced in its continuity (two sides of a square) ; and that is the position assigned to the well in the poem :

At west side springs a crystal well.  
There doth this chaste Avisa dwell.  
And there she dwells in public eye, etc.

This does not necessarily mean that she dwelt actually by the well on the west side of the castle. The meaning

## SUGGESTIONS OF WINCHESTER

is rather that the old castle, of which various marks of identity are given, including the famous deep well on its western side, is the best guide to the locality of the country inn. We have to think rather of a public-house on the nearest highway, which would be about half-a-mile to the east, at a hamlet where the high-road from Winchester to Romsey turns southwards to skirt Hursley Park. There is still another stanza of particulars about Avisa's family :

Along this plain there lies a down  
Where shepherds feed their frisking flocks :  
Her sire the mayor of the town,  
A lovely shoot of ancient stock.  
Full twenty years she lived a maid,  
And never was by man betrayed.

It is an obvious disadvantage of conveying prosaic details in rhymed verse, that the doggerel will not construe with absolute certainty. If her sire were the mayor of the town, how was it that she was living in a public-house, among "country hills," near to an old castle, which is about three miles distant from Winchester on the east and about four from Romsey on the west? Again, why introduce the sheep-down? A key is needed for these seeming irrelevancies or inconsistencies. The meaning may be that "her sire the mayor of the town" was her grandsire, and we may be instructed to take "sire" in that sense by the parenthesis which follows, that she was "a lovely shoot of ancient stock." It is the halting verse and rhyme that make these obscurities. The nearest town to Merdon is Winchester: the most common name among the mayors of that city at the time was Bird, Richard Bird having been mayor three times, and Anthony Bird twice, between 1571 and 1599. There are some half-dozen passages in the introductory or supplementary stanzas and prose matter in which Avisa is called a bird, by way of punning upon her name; and in one of these there is a suggestion of both a baptismal name,

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*a-visa* not seen, and a surname *avis* a bird, “our Not-seene Bird,” as if her name had been Avis Bird. But if Mr. Mayor Bird had been her grandfather, he may have been her maternal grandfather, and Bird her mother’s name; so that Avis Bird may have been only an ideal combination, not far removed from the reality. It is said that she

Was named Avisa by decree,  
That name and nature might agree,—

which may mean that her parents christened her Avis because her surname was Bird, or that the author joined a punning name to a real surname, or a punning surname to a real baptismal name, so as to be able to exercise his somewhat boyish wit upon them.

Thus far the clues to Avisa’s dwelling-place. Starting from her birthplace on the western side of the island (Glastonbury), we come to the Arcady and Helicon of the modern world (Wilton), and thence eastwards to an ancient bishops’ castle, which had lately been alienated from the Church to certain brothers, and is further distinguished by its well (Merdon). ✓ Thus the scene is laid in Hampshire, not far from Winchester. The suspicion that H. W., the familiar friend of W. S., was none other than Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, is thus strengthened by the discovery—which I take to be a certainty—that the heroine is an innkeeper’s barmaid in Southampton’s own county, not far from his residence in the town of Southampton (Bugle Hall), or from his principal seat at Titchfield, or near to Winchester on the way to these. He himself suits exactly the situation of the young nobleman whose attentions to Avisa at the country inn occupy the first thirteen cantos. Then she is married, and becomes the hostess of the George and Dragon in a busy town, frequented by “ruffians, roysterers, young gentlemen, and lusty captains,” where she has to parry the attacks of “thousands.” We have

## A HAMPSHIRE INN

no such minute clue to the identity of this town as we have to her pre-nuptial dwelling-place. But it may be assumed to have been in the same county:

When flying fame began to tell  
How beauty's wonder was return'd  
From country hills in towns to dwell,  
With special gifts and grace adorn'd,  
Of suitors store there might you see,  
And some were men of high degree.

This might have been Southampton, which was often filled with roysterers, young gentlemen, and lusty captains in those years, several expeditions under Lord Essex having sailed from it between 1589 and 1594. But it might equally well have been some town on the road to Southampton, such as Winchester or Basingstoke, at each of which there was an inn with the "sign of England's saint," the George and Dragon.

In 1636, a full generation after the date of the poem, John Taylor, the versatile waterman, published a catalogue of all the inns and taverns (to the number of some nine hundred) in the ten home counties, with the names of the licence-holders (male and female) and a good many of the signs ; he professes to have collected the information himself, so that it can hardly have been corrected down to the date of publication, as a modern directory would be. The name of Avis occurs in this catalogue twice—as a man's surname, Thomas Avis, at the Bell, South Mimms, Middlesex ; and as a woman's baptismal name at Basingstoke, in the following enumeration : "At Basingstoake, Anne Cross or Robert White, at the Bell ; Avis Yate or Anthony Spittle, at the Maidenhead ; Thomasin Barrell or Captaine Marlow, at the George."

It is curious, at all events, to find the name of H. W.'s heroine, Avis, an unusual name, borne by the hostess of an inn at a busy place such as the poem describes, and in the county where the scene is laid. But next I can show an even more curious coincidence. The surname

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of the Basingstoke hostess is Yate: it should have been her maiden surname, assuming that the man with whom she is joined in the licence were her husband. What I shall next show is that there were persons of the name of Yate living, in 1594, in that very manor of Merdon to which we have traced Avisa before her marriage, and that the said Mr. and Mrs. Yate, of Pitt Farm, were in correspondence with the household of Lady Southampton (his lordship's mother) at Southampton House, in Holborn, London. There are often strange coincidences, and I do not risk the case upon minute probabilities; but it may be worth while giving the facts which connect these Merdon people with the Southampton household.

They are found in the State Papers, in the communications made to Lord Keeper Puckering by a certain informer named Beard, concerning the movements of Catholics who were under suspicion of being parties to the Lopez plot against the Queen in 1594. It does not appear that the two priests referred to were really implicated in the plot or had any evil designs. The Countess of Southampton, whose name comes into the correspondence, was a Catholic, but she was none the less esteemed by Queen Elizabeth, and appears to have been an estimable lady in every way (I have a reason for suspecting that she was Shakespeare's original for the delightful old Countess of Rousillon in 'All's Well that Ends Well'). Two Jesuits had landed in Cornwall, and had been brought on their way as far as Hampshire, where they were harboured for some time by Mr. and Mrs. Yate at Pitt Farm, in Hampshire. On 16th March the information from Beard is, that "the two Jesuits lately with Mrs. Yates have gone to Mr. Wells at Brombridge"—an ancient Catholic house near Otterbourne, a few miles to the east of Merdon. It was the Yates who brought the Jesuits to London. Yate's wife and Tregon's wife and two daughters were present at the Mass held at Cornwallis' house of Fisher's

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Folly [Bishopsgate] by Jones, *alias* Norton, and Butler. Butler was sometime chamber-fellow with Mr. Harrington, who serves Lady Southampton. Beard thinks that since he has come over he is still harboured by him. They lived about eight years since in Southampton House. In the information dated 16th March, while they were still in Hampshire, it is stated that “they will return before Easter to London, where they always abide about Chancery Lane and Southampton House.”

“Pitt Farm, in Hampshire,” is one of the farms on the manor of Merdon, and gives its name to the hamlet of Pitt. The farm stands on the left-hand side of the high-road, about two miles out from Winchester, at the point where it turns southwards to Hursley village, a branch road being continued straight on to Merdon Castle. The extensive sheep-down which encloses the manor of Merdon on the north and west is called by the same name as the farm and hamlet—Pitt Down; so that Pitt Farm was probably the chief sheep-farm. It was occupied in 1594 by Mr. and Mrs. Yate, who had been engaged to receive two Jesuit priests lately landed in Cornwall, and previously known as frequenters of Southampton House in London. It appears from the same correspondence that the manor of Merdon had other Catholic tenants, perhaps because it had been so long under the Bishops of Winchester. What more likely than that the Countess of Southampton, or her steward in Holborn, should be acquainted with this recusant locality, not far from Southampton, and should have directed the Jesuits to a particular house in it? It almost implies some close relation between the Yates of Pitt Farm and the Southampton household, that the former should have harboured recusant priests, whom they brought to London and handed over to Lady Southampton’s people in Holborn. Thus we should have a special reason, besides the common fame of “beauty’s wonder” in his neighbourhood, why the young

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Lord Southampton should have known the maid of the inn or farm at Merton—Avisa, who became the object of the “nobleman’s” first boyish love (“Thou art the first I ever tried”). Whether she was Avis Yate of the Basingstoke inn in Taylor’s time I do not feel sure, although the coincidences of both the name Avis and the surname Yate in the hostess of an inn in Hampshire are striking enough. Even in 1636 she would have been little more than sixty. While the baptismal name Avis is found at Basingstoke in Taylor’s list, the surname Bird is found at Winchester, Ann Bird being the licence-holder at one of the four inns of the town, which may or may not have been the George, as the respective signs are not given. Whether Basingstoke or Winchester were the town meant in the poem, Samuel Daniel (the S. D. of the Latin verses upon Avisa) would have heard of this famous hostess, and probably seen her in his journeys to and from Wilton, where he was tutor to the young Lord Herbert.

These minute probabilities apart, there are sufficient grounds for the hypothesis that H. W. is Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, then at the age of twenty-one, and already the object of many compliments upon his wit and distinguished qualities. The initials are, of course, those of Henry Willolie also; but the latter is practically confessed to be a fiction; and at the place where the initials W. S. come in, the full name of Henry Willolie is dropped, or is used only in the playful Italian form of Henrico Willobegio, so that the initials H. W. are as it were set free for their real import as soon as the author’s direct relations with W. S. begin. Moreover, this change of plan is the subject of a special sentence in the preface: “From the 44th Canto to the end of the book it seems that, in this last example [of Avisa’s suitors], the author names himself, and so describeth his own love: who that was I know not, and I will not be curious.” No one seems to doubt the identity of W. S., and as we are told in the

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preface to the second edition that the readers of the book had been busy “framing names to letters,” it is hardly doubtful that they had framed Lord Southampton’s name to the letters H. W.

The identity of the French suitor, Dudum Beatus, ✓ with Barnabe Barnes, and of the German, Didymus Harco, with Gabriel Harvey, could be made probable by various things, involving, however, much citation and needing too much space.<sup>1</sup> It is at once easier and more useful to prove that a certain Rogero, who is introduced into the supplementary canto of the second edition, was Southampton’s closest friend, Lord Rutland. He is made arbiter in a supposed rivalry between Avisa and certain angry dames, and is thus described :

A noble prince in *Rosie* born,  
Rogero hight,—

with the marginal remark, “Rogero, a nobleman of Greece, not far from Helicon.” The meaning of “in Rosie born” appears to be that Roger Manners was known as Lord Roos or Ros from his birth until he succeeded to the earldom of Rutland in his twelfth year. The meaning of “not far from Helicon” is not clear at once, inasmuch as Helicon is Wilton, and the seat of

<sup>1</sup> One of the proofs is that D. B. signs himself “Fortuna ferenda,” which is Pistol’s favourite maxim. Another is the following resemblance between D. B. and Don Adriano de Armado (who is the same as Pistol). D. B. justifies his attempts to seduce Avisa by Biblical precedents :

The Lord did love King David well  
Although he had more wives than one.  
King Soloman that did excel  
For wealth and wit. . . .

*Armado.* Yet was Samson so tempted, and he had an excellent strength; yet was Solomon so seduced, and he had a very good wit.

It was a standing jest against Barnes that the piety of his second volume of verse, the *Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets*, assorted ill with his known character; as Nash said, it was “like the godly ballad of John Careless, or the tune of Greensleeves moralised,” the latter being turned round by Shakespeare to “the Hundredth Psalm sung to the tune of Greensleeves.” The name of *Dudum Beatus* in *Avisa* seems to point to Barnes’s profession that he had been converted, or that he had “found peace,” at some point of time between his first volume of verse and his second.

## SOUTHAMPTON AS A SUCCESSFUL POET

Lord Rutland was Belvoir in the Midlands ; but his lordship shortly after married the daughter of Sir Philip Sidney, who had made Wilton the English Helicon, and it may have been known to his friend that he was not far from that alliance at the time when he was exercising his wit upon Rogero. It may mean also that Rogero, a noble Greek, was not far from being a poet, which is consistent with what is known of Lord Rutland's cultivated taste.

If Lord Southampton published *Avisa* anonymously, and lived to see four more editions of it without putting his name to it, we may be sure that he was desirous only of being a poet under the rose. If I am not too prolix, I should like to strengthen that probability by another instance. In Francis Davison's *Poetical Rapsodie* (1602) there is the following “Inscription for the Statue of Dido” :

O most unhappy Dido,  
Unhappy wife and more unhappy widow !  
Unhappy in thy Mate,  
And in thy Lover more unfortunate.  
By treason the one was reft thee ;  
By treason the other left thee.  
That left thee means to fly with ;  
This left thee means to die with.  
The former being dead,  
From Brother's sword thou fliest.  
The latter being fled,  
On Lover's sword thou diest.

*Piu meritare, che conseguire.*

This poem comes last in the section of the volume in which are included “sonnets, odes, elegies, madrigals, and epigrams by Francis Davison and Walter Davison, brethren.” But it is signed with an Italian motto, and is the only poem in the whole volume that is signed in that way. On the other hand, many of the later cantos of *Avisa* are signed with similar mottoes (proverbs or maxims) in Italian, a language in which Lord Southampton had become proficient, as we know

## ‘WIDOW DIDO’

from his tutor, John Florio. I suspect that the inscription for the “statue” of Dido was his, for the following reasons :—

It will be observed that the first couplet contains the quaint conceit of Dido as a widow, and the forced rhyme of Dido to widow, which reminds one of Mercutio’s verbal wit, “Dido a dowdy.” This was a rhyme that was sure to have gone the round of the tavern wits, and it is a probable explanation (no other has ever been offered) of the joke about widow Dido against Antonio in ‘*The Tempest*.’ The talk having arisen about the recent marriage of Claribel at Tunis (ancient Carthage), Adrian remarks that “Tunis was never graced before with such a paragon to their queen”; whereupon Gonzalo, with crafty intent, adds: “Not since widow Dido’s time,” and at once Antonio shows irritation :

*Antonio.* Widow ! A pox o’ that ! How came that “widow” in ? widow Dido !

*Sebastian.* What if he had said “widower *Aeneas*” too ? Good Lord, how you take it !

A little later Antonio is again rallied upon widow Dido, and answers, “O widow Dido ! ay, widow Dido,” as if he were reaffirming and justifying the phrase. I believe that he was conscious also of the rhyme between “Dido” and “widow” as his own. It is not altogether impossible to construct the circumstances in which Southampton wrote the inscription for the statue of Dido.

In Henslowe’s *Diary* he enters among the theatrical properties of the Lord Admiral’s men, at the date of March 1599, not only Dido’s robe but also her tomb (“i tome of Dido”). The tomb could not possibly have been required for Marlowe’s *Tragedy of Dido* (1594), as the queen perishes by throwing herself into the flames of a heap of wood, of which her attendants had made a fire ; and the curtain falls immediately, upon the death of Dido’s sister Anna and of her lover,

## SOUTHAMPTON AS A SUCCESSFUL POET

Iarbas, by their own hands. But it appears from Henslowe's day-book that there was another play, *Dido and Æneas*, performed by the Lord Admiral's men on the 8th of January 1598. On the third of that month he had "layd owte xxixs. for copper lace for the littell boye, for a valle (? veil) for the boye, ageanste the playe of Dido and Eneus"—that is to say, the play was in preparation. The occasion of its first production by the Lord Admiral's men was clearly a special one—at night and on a private stage : "Lent [for one] unto the company, when they fyrst played Dido at nyght, the some of thirty shillynges, w<sup>ch</sup> wasse the 8 of Jenewary, 1597, I saye xxxs"—meaning 8th January 1597. The public performances in the theatres were in the day-time ; a performance at night would have been in some nobleman's mansion, and the special payment to the company points to the same thing. (Collier, who edited the *Diary*, is driven to the interpretation that Henslowe gave the actors thirty shillings to regale themselves with at a tavern on the night of the 8th of January, after they had played *Dido* in the daytime ; but the words "when they first played Dido at night" are capable of only one meaning.) This, then, was probably the play for which the tomb of Dido was required ; whether it had carried the action of the tragedy beyond the self-immolation of the queen or not, it had probably ended with an epilogue and the exhibition of her tomb, which may have had the above inscription upon it, just as the same *Poetical Rapsodie* shows elsewhere the diagram of 'An Altar and Sacrifice to Disdain,' with verses printed in a formal way as if inscribed upon it.

Nothing more is heard of this play of *Dido and Æneas* after its first production at night on the 8th of January. My conjecture is that it was got up by Lord Southampton, who employed Henslowe to stage it for him at Southampton House ; and that is made probable by the following from a letter written to Sir Robert Sidney on the 30th of January 1598 : "My Lord

## ‘DIDO AND ÆNEAS’

Compton, my Lord Cobham, Sir Walter Rawley, my Lord Southampton, doe severally feast Mr. Secretary [Cecil] before he depart [for Paris] and have Plaies and Banquets.” These plays and banquets must have extended over some short time during Cecil’s preparations for his Embassy ; it became known on 14th January that “my Lord Southampton goes with Mr. Secretary to France” ; and his entertainment to Cecil may well have been given before that date, say on the 8th, the play being *Dido and Æneas*, which, if not all written by his lordship, yet had an Epilogue by him, in the form of an epitaph for Dido’s tomb. (See the note on “Æneas’ Tale to Dido” in Chapter XII.)

## CHAPTER VIII

### SOUTHAMPTON AS COLLABORATOR, 1594-1597

The picture given us in *Willolie his Avisa* of the author, H. W., conferring with his friend and adviser W. S., is a very natural one if it be understood of Lord Southampton and Shakespeare; it is quite in keeping with the warm terms of the dedication of ‘*Lucrece*’: “The love I dedicate to your lordship is without end. . . . What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours.” *What I have to do is yours*:—if this had been taken literally, and enforced without “remorse and nature” when the critical moment came, it would be not unlike the motive for supplanting Prospero in the political allegory. What he had to do in the immediate future was to devote his imaginative powers to dramatic composition; and I have now to show that he conceived this project in collaboration with his patron. Southampton’s authorship of *Avisa*, which I have been at some pains to prove, is evidence not only of his ability to write clever and witty verse, but also of his literary ambition. *Avisa*’s prefaces contain hints of other pretty conceits from the same pen; and the poem ends with a qualified promise:

If this be liked, then can I say  
Ye may see more another day.

It was indeed remarkably successful, perhaps just because it was a *jeu d'esprit*. It is reasonable to suppose

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that his first practice with the pen had given him a taste for more work, perhaps in a different line ; and what more natural, after working with Shakespeare, than that he should think of the poetic drama as a proper object for them both ? Shakespeare's indifference to, or disdain for, the *vilia vulgi* had kept him hitherto from doing anything for the stage beyond dressing other men's plays (all the confident statements assigning early dates to 'Love's Labour's Lost' and 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' are only guesses, and are absolutely baseless). His friendship with Southampton corresponds in time, at least, with a new prospect for his ambition, in which the end was dramatic work as truly of Castalian inspiration as the poesy too delicate for the stage. Let us suppose him contemplating Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, which, we can still see from Henslowe's accounts, was a play that drew good houses and had a long run. Why not aim at an equal success with something in a different vein ? This may not have been exactly the way that 'The Merchant of Venice' came to be written, but at all events that seems to have been the play, under the name of 'The Venetian Comedy,' which was produced at Henslowe's theatre in the autumn of 1594 (about the same time that *Avisa* was published), and proved so successful that the new Jew, Shylock, shortly drove Marlowe's Jew into the background, the process of supplanting being traceable clearly by the entries in the manager's day-book. The plays which followed, as I interpret the order, were : 'The Comedy of Errors'; an early draft of 'Henry V.', with Pistol and Fluellen prominent in it; 'Edward III.'; 'Richard II.'; 'Romeo and Juliet'; and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'—filling the years from 1594 to 1597. (To the same period belongs 'Richard III.', but that appears rather to be in the class of old plays which Shakespeare rewrote thoroughly.) He must have had, or he did have, some help or collaboration (perhaps more than he wanted) in all these ; and I shall take first, out of its

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order, the history of ‘Edward III.’ which was anonymous like all the others printed before 1598, and was never claimed by Shakespeare, although it is admitted by many good judges, including Tennyson, to contain his undoubted work.

### ‘KING EDWARD THE THIRD’

This play, first printed in 1596, is occupied mainly with Edward III.’s victories in France, which are crowded together and displaced from their order, so that Poitiers (1356) comes before Calais (1347); but it contains also, in the two first Acts, a love-episode between the king and the Countess of Salisbury (from Painter’s *Palace of Pleasure*), which takes place at Roxborough Castle, on the Scottish border. It is only in the two first Acts that Shakespeare’s hand has been clearly traced; it is obvious to every reader that the three last Acts are almost uniformly commonplace and inferior, the one exception being in the fourth scene of Act IV. (Black Prince); and in my opinion these battle-pieces are the work of Barnabe Barnes, and in the same style as ‘*I Henry VI.*’ But the two first Acts are by no means homogeneous. The first scene, at the Court in London, is in the same routine manner as the opening scene of ‘*Henry V.*’ (in the quarto, not the folio), and deals with the same question as there, but much more briefly, namely, the English heritable succession to the French Crown. There is one notable speech in it, by the king, beginning,

See how occasion laughs me in the face !

Shakespeare in this instance follows his old rule of picking out the best situations for himself. His next interposition is at the close of the first scene at Roxborough Castle, where he ends the first interview between the king and the countess by two speeches of lively rhyme. In the Second Act he undertakes a good deal more; but

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even there, in the midst of the love-episode, there is another pen at work from time to time, which I believe to have been Southampton’s. The style of these non-Shakespearian passages is radically different from the commonplace verbiage in which the battles and sieges of the three last Acts are displayed : it is a peculiar style, with abundance of ideas, but stiff in the movement, passionless, and coldly sententious. It will be necessary, for an ulterior object, to give samples of it. The speeches of Warwick, the father of the lady whom the king loves, are all in this manner :

The mighty King of England dotes on thee :  
He that hath power to take away thy life  
Hath power to take thine honour ; then consent  
To pawn thine honour, rather than thy life :  
Honour is often lost and got again :  
But life, once gone, hath no recovery.  
The sun, that withers hay, doth nourish grass :  
The king that would distain thee will advance thee.  
The poets write that great Achilles’ spear  
Could heal the wounds it made : the moral is—  
What mighty men misdo, they can amend, etc.

Even the answer of the countess, his daughter, is in the same coldly argumentative style, and so is the next speech of Warwick :

The freshest summer’s day doth soonest taint  
The loathed carrion that it seems to kiss :  
Deep are the blows made with a mighty axe :  
That sin doth ten times aggravate itself,  
That is committed in a holy place :  
An evil deed done by authority  
Is sin and subornation : deck an ape  
In tissue, and the beauty of the robe  
Adds but the greater scorn unto the beast.  
A spacious field of reasons could I urge  
Between his glory, daughter, and thy shame :  
That poison shows worst in a golden cup :  
Dark night seems darker by the lightning flash :  
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds, etc.

Surely Shakespeare was incapable, at any time since

## SOUTHAMPTON AS COLLABORATOR

he began to make verses, of such a series of copy-book maxims, which are all measured to the length of a line, which never glide gracefully the one into the other, which contain thought without fancy, argument without one gleam of feeling. It is in the speech last quoted that we find the famous line—

Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds—

famous because it reappears in Shakespeare's 94th Sonnet. The germ of this metaphor of the lilies and the weeds is found in the 10th Canto of *Willsbie his Avisa*, where the young nobleman, angry at being repelled by the low-born maid of the inn, compares himself to a lily and her to a weed :

*from Marlowe's*  
*Avisa*  
Unhappy lily loves a weed,  
That gives no scent, that yields no glee.

*lives* The 94th Sonnet is one of two in the whole series of 154 (the other being the 121st) in which some third party, neither Shakespeare nor the person habitually addressed, is referred to in the plural number as "they" :

They that have power to hurt and will do none,  
That do not do the thing they most do show,  
Who, moving others, are themselves as stonc,  
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow.

That is also the character of Dumaine, in 'Love's Labour's Lost'; and both Dumaine and "they" of S. 94 are Lord Southampton. We get the clue to his identity through the reference to "infection" in the 11th line :

The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,  
Though to itself it only live and die :  
But if that flower with base infection meet,  
The basest weed outbraves his dignity.  
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds ;  
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

The flower which meets with base infection carries us back to Sonnets 67 and 68 :

## ‘EDWARD III.’

Ah ! wherefore with infection should he live ?

The sonnet is an affectionate appeal to Lord Herbert in the third person. The indirect address to him runs on into the next sonnet, where we come to the contrast of “infection,” the simile of the untainted flower living and dying to itself, which, in the second line of the following, is the same figure of speech as in the 10th line of S. 94 just given :

Thus is his cheek the map of days outworn,  
When beauty lived and died as flowers do now,  
Before these bastard signs of fair were born,  
Or durst inhabit on a living brow :  
Before the golden tresses of the dead,  
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,  
To live a second life on second head.

This is a very bold and unmistakable hit at Lord Southampton. Looking at his long “browny” curls in one or more of his portraits as a young man, some have doubted (for example, the late Mr. S. Butler, *Shakespeare’s Sonnets*, 1899, p. 54) whether they were not a wig ; but the fact is actually on record. Among other Court news written to Sir Robert Sidney, Governor of Flushing, by his secretary at home, is an account of a fracas in the Court between Southampton and Ambrose Willoughby, one of the esquires of the body, on a night in January 1598, in which the latter laid hands upon the young lord, “and pulled off some of the Earl’s locks.”

At the date of this first reference, in Sonnets 67 and 68, to the summer flower being infected by a tainted companion, which would be early in 1599, Shakespeare had merely the interest of affection in warning Lord Herbert against Southampton, who had just returned from a prolonged and reckless dissipation in Paris. But at the date of Sonnet 94 he had a reason more personal to himself ; for he had lately discovered that it was through the machinations of his quondam patron that Lord Herbert had been gained over to

## SOUTHAMPTON AS COLLABORATOR

oppose his candidature for the vacant office of Poet Laureate. He expresses his sense of the situation with his unfailing wit, by quoting Southampton's own line about the festering lilies in 'Edward III.', convicting him by a moral tag out of his own mouth. It is clear that the sonnet was constructed so as to end with the quotation of the old line, from the fact that the penultimate line is a forced idiom for the sake of getting in "deeds" to rhyme with "weeds."

Shakespeare's share in 'Edward III.' had been relatively so small in bulk (although it is the redeeming part of the play) that he did not claim the authorship, and of course he did not claim part authorship. It is probable that the play was Lord Southampton's own design, and that Barnes had been left, after the Second Act, to finish it as a mere "drum-and-trumpet thing," like 'I Henry VI.' In the original quarto of 1596 (copy in the British Museum) there is a change actually in the typography at the beginning of Act III., the heading of that and following scenes being in bold type, as if so marked upon a new MS. This is the only play of what I shall call the collaboration-period, besides the opening of 'Henry V.', which bears quite obvious traces of a third hand, that of Barnabe Barnes, whom I suppose (Chapter VI.) to have been Shakespeare's assistant in extracting plots from Holinshed, both historical and legendary, as late as 'Cymbeline' and 'Macbeth.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Barnes is Pistol; and in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' Pistol is accused by Slender of having picked his purse of "seven groats in mill-sixpences and two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shillings and two pence a-piece of Yead Miller, by these gloves." Pistol denies the charge:

Sir John and master mine,  
I combat challenge of this latten bilbo.  
Word of denial in thy labras here!  
Word of denial: froth and scum, thou liest.

Abraham Slender is Francis Thynne, who, with John Stow and Abraham Fleming, was employed under Hoker, of Exeter, in editing the new edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, from which all the historical plots were taken. The seven groats in mill-sixpences (coins with milled edges used as counters)

## A COMEDY AT GRAY'S INN

### 'THE COMEDY OF ERRORS'

The circumstances of the production of 'The Comedy of Errors' suit the hypothesis of Southampton's collaboration. It was produced on the night of 28th December 1594, in the Hall of Gray's Inn. Southampton had been a member of the Inn since 1589, and his house was in Holborn exactly opposite its gateway (the site being still marked by the name of Southampton Buildings). Let us say that he had undertaken to get up a play for the Christmas festivities ; Shakespeare would help him in it, as well as Barnes ; perhaps also John Florio would be useful from his acquaintance with the theme of the 'Errors' as a favourite in Italian and Spanish comedies. The 'Comedy of Errors' is peculiar among all the adaptations of Plautus as combining the action of two plays, the *Menaechmi* and the *Amphitryon* ; besides the confusion between the two merchants, the twin-brothers Antipholus (which is from the plot of the *Menaechmi*), there is the confusion between their respective servants, the twin-brothers Dromio (which is from the plot of the *Amphitryon*). As regards the two

were the seven editions to date of four historical plays—two of 'Richard II.,' two of 'Richard III.,' two of '1 Henry IV.,' and another which may have been either '2 Henry IV.' or the anonymous 'Henry V.' The two Edward shovel-boards (broad shillings of Edward VI. used in the game of shovel-board) were the two editions of 'Edward III.' ; but Yead Miller is a mystery. Falstaff sees his ancient through the accusation : " You hear all these matters denied, gentlemen ; you hear it." Nym had been taxed with the theft after Pistol denied it, and, in the folio text, Bardolf also is made to answer the charge. I have not found any good clue to their identities, although both must have been drawn from life. I suspect Nym to be Marston, and mine host of the Garter to be Ben Jonson. Dr. Caius is the name of a well-known physician not long dead. I have given an explanation of Shakespeare's exhibition of him as a Frenchman in an article on "Falstaff's Deathbed" in *Blackwood's Magazine*, March 1889. Dr. Johnson says : " This comedy is remarkable for the variety and number of the personages, who exhibit more characters appropriated and discriminated than perhaps can be found in any other play." It is most instructive to find that the other play on which he makes a similar remark is 'Troilus and Cressida' : " He has diversified his characters with great variety, and preserved them with exactness." I shall show in Chapter XII. that the latter play is full of real persons, poets and statesmen.

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Dromios, it was not absolutely necessary that Shakespeare should have read Plautus at all, whether in Latin or in a translation ; for the *Amphitryon* had been made into an Interlude for children's acting some years before. It is known that there was a *History of Error* acted by the children of Paul's in 1577; and there is extant a single copy of *A new Enterlued for Chyldren to play, named Jacke Jugeler*, printed without date by Wylliam Copland in Lothbury. (It has been reprinted by Grosart, in a volume of Elizabethan Miscellanies, but without comment upon its Latin source, or its relation to 'The Comedy of Errors.') "The ground thereof" is stated to be "out of Plautus' first comedie," that is to say, *Amphitryon*, the first in alphabetical order of the titles. The plot is reduced to the simplicity of an interlude for children to play, and adapted to life in London. The chief parts are those of Jack Juggler and Jenkin Careaway, two servants who correspond closely with the two Dromios in Shakespeare's 'Errors.' Thus Jack says :

My purpose is,  
To make Jenkin believe, if I can,  
That he is not himself but another man.

The fun in *Amphitryon* is made by the deity Mercury assuming the likeness of the servant Sosia ; in the English interlude Jack "makes up" to resemble Jenkin ; in 'The Comedy of Errors' the two Dromios are twin-brothers with a very close *natural* resemblance. Dromio of Syracuse finds himself by nature the same double that Jack Juggler made himself by art : "Do you know me, sir ? Am I Dromio ? am I your man ? am I myself ?" Not only does Shakespeare follow the humours of this quaint interlude, especially in the scene outside the street door in Act III. Scene i., but he falls for the nonce into the same long jingling rhymes, with a halt in the middle (as he does also in the mummery of the Nine Worthies in the fifth Act of 'Love's Labour's Lost').

## ‘THE COMEDY OF ERRORS’

With such hints from the old English interlude (probably the same as the *History of Error* spoken of under the year 1577), it may not have been necessary to go to the original of the *Amphitryon*. But it is probable that the author of *Locrine* (Barnes) knew the original, from the fact that the rather heavy humour between the famishing Humber and Strumbo, ending with the latter’s speech, “O alas, sir, you are deceived. I am not Mercury, I am Strumbo,” is based upon the situation of Sosia in the Latin play. There is also the curious correspondence (already pointed out by Wisclicenus, in *Shakespeare Jahrbücher*, xiv. 1879) between the end of ‘Pericles’ (by Barnes) and the end of ‘The Comedy of Errors’: the supposed dead wife of Pericles is discovered in the priestess of the temple of Diana at Ephesus, and the supposed lost wife of Ægeon is found in the abbess of a convent in the same city. The whole of the ‘Errors’ relating to the two merchants Antipholus are taken very closely from the text of the *Menaechmi* (of which the first English translation, by W. W., was not published until the year after, 1595, although it is said to have been in existence in MS. some time before). In this instance it is perhaps hopeless to allocate their respective shares to the collaborators, as I believe one can do in ‘Edward III.’ and in some of the plays to be taken next. Shakespeare claimed the work as his when he gave Meres a list of his plays in the autumn of 1598; and, as it had never been printed in quarto, he was free to rewrite it, or to remove all traces of another pen which he may not have been satisfied with. But in using Latin or Italian sources, it is nearly certain that he had help; and in managing the humorous confusions of the action—more intricate than Plautus had attempted in a single play—two heads would have been better than one.

## SOUTHAMPTON AS COLLABORATOR

### 'THE MERCHANT OF VENICE'

Although it is probable that this, the most popular of the Comedies, was put on the stage in the autumn of 1594, it is first heard of under its ultimate name through the entry of it for copyright on 22nd July 1598, by James Roberts, a printer whom Shakespeare employed. The copyright was withheld by the wardens until the Lord Chamberlain's licence had been got. Two years after, 1600, the first edition was printed by Roberts without a publisher's name; and on 28th October of that year, Thomas Hayes took out copyright for the book, "with the consent of Mr. Roberts," and issued an edition, also dated 1600, which bears that it was printed for him by Roberts. Here we have the same singular phenomenon as in the publication the same year (and same month of the year) of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' namely, two concurrent editions; but in the latter case neither issue had a publisher's name, while only one of them was printed by Roberts. The text of 'The Merchant of Venice' in 1600 is so polished that good judges (the late W. G. Clark and Dr. Aldis Wright) believe it to have been "in great part rewritten between the time of its first production in 1594 and its publication in 1600." There are now so few inequalities in it that it is impossible to trace another hand. If anywhere, we may look for persisting traces of the collaborator in the passages relating to Portia's numerous suitors. But we may be sure that it was Shakespeare who wrote, or rewrote, the monologue of Bassanio; for it illustrates the theme of golden illusions by a reference to those who wear false locks, which is the same theme as in Sonnet 68, and would have been inspired by the recollection of the quondam patron and collaborator:

Look on beauty,  
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;  
Which therein works a miracle in nature,

## 'THE MERCHANT OF VENICE'

Making them lightest that wear most of it :  
So are those crisped snaky locks  
Which make such wanton gambles with the wind  
Upon supposed fairness, often known  
To be the dower of a second head,  
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.

Collaboration must be asserted for this comedy, not because of any marked inequality in the workmanship (which indeed would have been got rid of in the assumed rewriting previous to 1600), but because there are materials in the plot, from an Italian source, which Shakespeare would not have got access to without help. The source of the Shylock part is accounted for easily, inasmuch as the Jew and his bond was a favourite subject of ballads at the time, such as *Gernutus* and *The Forfeiture*. But in the former ballad the judge is the ordinary judge of the court, and in the latter the successful pleader against Shylock before the court is the Jew's own daughter. Shakespeare may have wished to vary that part of the old story for the sake of a more complex plot. At all events the play introduces the new part of Portia ; and it appears that the lady of that name, occupying a house called Belmont on the shore of the Adriatic near Venice, and in other respects corresponding to the Portia of the play (together with the story of the rings in Act V.), existed at that time only in Italian, in a collection of tales called *Il Pecorone*, dating from Florence about the year 1378. There is no escaping from the necessity for collaboration here : some one must have told him of this foreign work, and helped him to read it. The incident of the caskets was not so completely beyond his own reach, as he might have found it in a pure form in the collection called *Gesta Romanorum*, supposing that he had Latin enough (which is nearly certain) and patience to dig out what he needed (which is not so certain).

Assuming that 'The Merchant of Venice,' as printed in its polished form in 1600, was the same play as

## SOUTHAMPTON AS COLLABORATOR

‘The Venetian Comedy,’ which met with success at Henslowe’s theatre from the 25th of August 1594 until after the New Year (a good run, but not so continuous nor so long as a revival of it would have now), it was the first of the plays which Shakespeare wrote in collaboration with his patron ; and I do not doubt that he was indebted to the latter not a little both for the inception of the design and the execution of the plot.

### ‘A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM’

This famous comedy, and the not less celebrated tragedy of ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ are two of the plays in which Lord Southampton’s direct and active participation may be looked for. The history of the printed texts of both is peculiar. ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ was printed first in 1600, in two editions by different printers, but with an almost identical text. One of these, which Shakespeare’s executors used for the text of the play in the folio of 1623, was printed by James Roberts, who was sometimes employed by Shakespeare. Curiously enough, this edition was not entered at Stationers’ Hall, so that the period of the year 1600 at which it issued from the press cannot be guessed. But on the 8th October 1600 another printer, Thomas Fisher, entered the play for copyright, and issued the same text with no other changes than might be accounted for by better composing from a printed copy. It is clear that these were rival editions ; and, in my opinion, it is equally clear that the one printed by Roberts was the original edition, and the other a replica of it. But it would be an error to call either of them a piracy. Shakespeare’s printer could not pirate his work ; nor could another printer have secured copyright for the book unless he had some authority. The authority of a collaborator would suffice ; and in the hypothesis that the joint

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authors of a work were no longer at amity, it is intelligible that the publishing rights of each should have been recognised separately. What is hardly to be assumed is, that the business of Stationers’ Hall should have been carried on with such laxity as to allow piracy under the author’s eyes. The case which is always cited as a precedent for the unauthorised publication of a playwright’s work is that of Heywood, who says that he had heard of his *English Traveller* “coming accidentally to the press,” in 1631, and had thought fit to father it with his name and a preface; but he explains, further, that he had no ambition to see his plays printed, which shows his case to be exceptional, or at all events not Shakespeare’s case. The hypothesis that explains best the strange history of the lifetime editions of some of his plays is, that there were collateral rights, which in some cases prevented his name from appearing (‘Romeo and Juliet’ and ‘Henry V.’), and in other cases enabled a rival edition to be published almost simultaneously (‘Merchant of Venice’ and ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’).

No trace of another pen than Shakespeare’s in ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ can be discovered, for the sufficient reason that it was highly polished, and probably rewritten in parts, before it was sent to the press in 1600. The assumption of rewriting, which is allowed for ‘The Merchant of Venice,’ is even more necessary for ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream.’ Its harmonious blending of three or four different and almost incongruous actions is among the most wonderful feats of the author’s genius. It must have cost him time and thought to bring the text to the perfection of the 1600 quarto. The evidence of polishing is apparent in various passages, including the famous compliment to the Virgin Queen. The reference in the lines :

The thrice-three Muses mourning for the death  
Of learning, late deceased in beggary,

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is obviously to the death of Spenser (who died *inops*, or in want, as Camden records), and to the title of Spenser's own poem, "The Tears of the Muses," just as the reference to his death in the Sonnets, 64-66, contains a play upon the title of another poem by Spenser, "The Ruins of Time." In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' the supposed elegy is called "a satire keen and critical"; which indeed the three beautiful sonnets are in a sense, especially the famous one beginning "Tired with all these." Spenser died in January 1599; and if these lines were written, as in the hypothesis they must have been, after that date, other passages were probably rewritten or polished in the same interval.

While we are safe to infer that the author had been at work upon this most characteristic and doubtless favourite product of his genius down to the year 1599, or perhaps to the year after (when it was printed), it is not so easy to find the other limit, or its commencement. Several things point to the year 1596; but there is a long speech by Titania on the unnatural summer of 1594 (and on an equally inverted winter, which is made to follow in the play, but appears really to have preceded, in 1593-94); and that has been held to mean the writing of the play while the topic of the weather was still fresh in mind. Old Churchyard, however, gave a fillip to the subject a year later (1595) by relating how a certain lord had remarked to him "that the weather was too cold for poets"—a good hint to enlarge upon. Supposing that we admit the weight of evidence, that the plot could not have been settled until 1596, the lines on the cold summer of 1594 might have been done earlier and independently, and worked into the play, just as the Queen Mab passage in 'Romeo and Juliet' appears to have been worked in so that it might not be lost.

Mr. Gerald Massey, who has elaborated the theory that Lord Southampton was the young noble of Shake-

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peare's Sonnets, and that his future wife, Mistress Bess Vernon, was the lady of the same, has developed incidentally another theory, that 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' was written to celebrate their prospective (and long-delayed) wedding. There is much to be said for the latter theory ; Demetrius, in the play, may well have been Southampton himself, and Helena Mistress Vernon ; while their crossed loves, and the rivalries of Lysander and Hermia, may have corresponded with some actual circumstances, of which no account remains.<sup>1</sup> Helena and Hermia appear to have been drawn from life ; and the charming character of the former is curiously like that of the other Helena, in 'All's Well that Ends Well,' who was, in my opinion, certainly meant for Mistress Vernon. In the hypothesis that Lord Southampton's own love-affairs are in the play, it would follow that Shakespeare could not have known them at all intimately unless he had been in his lordship's confidence. Also he writes of the Athenian lords and ladies as if he had had himself a courtier's knowledge of the great world. Again, one may suspect that the fairy-lore of the play must have been elaborated in concert with some one who had a store of a certain kind of fairy tales in his memory ; and in that connection I would assign to the same collaborator the actual writing of the long digression upon Queen Mab in 'Romeo and Juliet.' In the conception of Duke Theseus we see Shakespeare's proper genius, and of course also in all

<sup>1</sup> That there were such possibilities may be exemplified by the following letter of 5th July 1594, from Mary Hardinge to the Countess of Rutland, suggesting the disposal of the hand of the Lady Bridget Manners to the Lord Wharton : "I think if your ladyship ask Mr. Manners his advice, he will speak straight of my Lord Bedford or my Lord Southampton, which is exceeding unlikely. If they were in her choice, she saith she would choose my Lord Wharton before them ; for they be so young and fantastical, and would be so carried away, that if anything should come to your ladyship but good, being her only stay, she doubteth their carrying of themselves, seeing some experience of the like in this place. . . . Bridget is weary of the Court. . . . I think the nearest way were for her to feign the measles, so she might have leave for a month to see your ladyship to air her." —Cal. Belvoir MSS.

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that related to the rehearsal and performance of the play by the “rude mechanicals” of Athens.

But if we allow that Lord Southampton had not contributed a single line of the text which was printed in 1600, and even that his share in the construction of the plot could only have been in discussing it with Shakespeare, we should still have to admit the author’s indebtedness for materials to him, or to some one with an equally good library and artistic collection. I shall give three illustrations of those necessary sources of the playwright’s ideas.

First, and most essential, is the “business” upon which the whole action turns, namely, the property of a juice or liquid expressed or distilled from some flower, when dropped upon the eyelids, to excite love, or contrariwise dislike, for the object that the eye first opens upon. This fancy does not appear to have been so widely spread in folk-lore that Shakespeare might have known it without going to a special source. It is not quite the same notion as in the couplet of ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ of which there are indications in other writers of the time :

Take thou some new infection in thine eye,  
And the rank poison of the old will die.

The general idea of one poison expelling another was familiar (as in Gardiner’s *Triall of Tobacco*, 1611), but the action of the drug upon the eye in particular, with rapid subjective effects in the passions and affections, is more recondite. The nearest approach to Shakespeare’s use of the juice of a flower to excite love, or bring back love, or displace love in the eye, has been recognised by several critics in the Spanish story of *Diana* by George de Montemayor, which has been used more extensively for the plot of ‘The Two Gentlemen of Verona,’ and used also for some things in ‘Twelfth Night.’ The chief difference is that Montemayor does not derive his liquor from a particular flower, nor

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indeed explicitly from flowers at all ; but that need not make any difficulty as to the source, for it is easy to see that Shakespeare had a reason for bringing in the pansy, or heart’s-ease, or love-in-idleness, as the flower from which the magic juice was to be expressed. So far as concerns the effects, he may well have got the hint from *Diana*, and no one appears to have found a better origin. The shepherdess, Felismena, had lost the love of Felix, who had transferred his affections to Celia (this is Proteus deserting Julia for Silvia in ‘The Two Gentlemen of Verona’) ; Felismena goes in search of him (as Julia goes after Proteus), and finds him on the ground wounded and insensible. To her in her grief there is seen approaching a fair nymph, over the cause-way that led to the island, bearing a silver flask in one hand and a golden in the other. From the silver bottle Felix is sprinkled on the face with an odoriferous water, so that he comes to his senses ; next he is made to drink, doubtless from the golden bottle, and becomes at once whole of his wounds. Felismena has been bending over him during these rapid changes, in which his usurping love for Celia has been expelled ; “and in this sort he began to rekindle the old love that he bare to Felismena, the which, he thought, was never more zealous than now.” This is near enough to the general idea of ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream,’ although the particular application in the play is varied and amplified. The sentence just quoted is from the translation by Bartholomew Young, which was not published until November 1598, too late to have been used for the plot either of ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ or of ‘Two Gentlemen of Verona.’ But it has been discovered that there was another English translation which has never been printed,<sup>1</sup> “done out of Spanish by Thomas Wilson, Esquire, in the year 1596, and dedicated to the Earl of Southampton, who was then upon the Spanish

<sup>1</sup> The title of it is entered among the MSS. of the Earl of Denbigh in Bernard’s *Catalogus librorum manuscriptorum Angliae*, 1697, vol. ii. p. 36.

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voyage with my lord of Essex"—that is to say, some time between March and July 1596. It was most probably from that MS. that Shakespeare got the plot of 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona,' which we know from Meres to have been written before Young's translation appeared in November 1598; and it may have been from the same manuscript, deposited in the library of Southampton House, that he got the idea of dropping a liquor upon the eyelids to change the passions of the mind as soon as the sleeping person opened his or her eyes. There is, of course, no medicinal reason why the liquor should have been derived from the pansy. The exquisite conceit of the little western flower, once milk-white, now purple with love's wound, upon which the bolt of Cupid fell, has a strictly private meaning to Shakespeare, and was probably meant for only one other pair of eyes—Mistress Fitton's, the maid-of-honour between whom and Shakespeare a romantic attachment (originating in the opportunities of Court theatricals) had sprung up some time previous to 1598. The pansy was her floral emblem. The shaft of Cupid missed the Queen, and fell upon the little western flower, the symbol of her young maid-of-honour from Cheshire. This allegory was probably one of the embellishments which the author made upon the play before he sent it to be printed.

Besides the MS. translation of Montemayor's *Diana*, which he had access to in Lord Southampton's library as early as the summer of 1596, it can be shown that Shakespeare must have seen also an elegantly printed, and perhaps privately distributed, souvenir of the festivities at the baptism of Prince Henry, the eldest son of James VI., at Stirling on 30th August 1594. This work was printed by King James's printer, with the royal arms of Scotland on two of its pages, and does not appear to have been published for sale: it is just the kind of souvenir that would have been made and distributed afterwards to the numerous envoys and their

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suites from other Protestant States who attended the celebration, and to other privileged persons. The interest of it for 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' is that it contains the original of the famous jest about "the ladies being afeard of the lion" as he was personated by Snug the joiner. At a certain part of the christening festivities at Stirling Castle, a chariot laden with delicacies was drawn into the banqueting hall by a blackamoor.

"This chariot," says the record, "should have been drawn by a lion; but because his presence might have brought some fear to the nearest ['the ladies' is the reading used by Nimmo in his *History of Stirlingshire*], or that the sight of the lights and torches might have commoved his tameness, it was thought meet that the Moor should supply that room." Another vehicle of viands and delicacies for the banquet was a large full-rigged galley, which was drawn into the hall with Arion playing the harp as he sat upon the dolphin forming the galley's figurehead, while three mermaids ("above the middle as women, and under as fishes") seemed to arise out of the "lively counterfeit sea of all colours" upon which the galley rested. King James's solicitude lest the ladies should be afraid of the lion gave Shakespeare his cue for the solicitude of Snout the tailor; while the ingenious expedient of Bottom to allay those fears had been suggested to him by another and more famous pageant, always associated with the sources of this comedy, that of Kenilworth, in July 1575, in which Harry Goldingham played the part of Arion upon the dolphin's back: "Finding his voice to be very hoarse and unpleasant, when he came to perform it, he tears off his disguise, and swears that he was none of Arion, not he, but even honest Harry Goldingham"—to Queen Elizabeth's great amusement. It was therefore agreed, upon the advice of Bottom, that he who played the lion should make a similar declaration: he told the ladies plainly that he was Snug the joiner, and

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no lion. I take it that all this pleasantry was concocted in the library of Southampton House.

A third instance of Shakespeare's indebtedness to "documents" such as he could have found only in a nobleman's house, was pointed out to me by the late Dr. A. S. Murray. The scene of the play is ancient Athens, for which famous city Shakespeare would have had to "get up" a certain amount of local colour, even if he did not use it to make a display of his learning. Dr. Murray's happy discovery is, that when one looks closely into the doggerel verses of Bottom, "The raging rocks and shivering shocks," etc., one finds that they contain the main ideas of the famous eastern pediment of the Parthenon (lately under his care in the British Museum), showing the birth of Pallas, the patron goddess of Athens :

The raging rocks  
And shivering shocks  
Shall break the locks  
    Of prison gates.  
And Phibus' car  
Shall shine from far,  
And make or mar  
    The foolish fates.

Until some two or three hundred years ago what is now a great gap in the centre of the eastern pediment was filled with a mass of marble representing a convulsion of nature (the raging rocks), from the midst of which emerged the colossal figure of Pallas brandishing her spear. On her right, at the extreme angle of the pediment, is "Helios in chariot rising from the sea" (Phibus' car). On her immediate left is a colossal group of the three Fates (who are present at every birth), expressing amazement by their attitudes and by their faces (according to the prints made before the heads were broken). There are in the pediment other figures, including a colossal Theseus, "Duke of Athens." But the three things in Bottom's doggerel, the central earthquake, the sun-god reining in his horses to watch

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it from afar, and the amazement of the Fates, would have been the most likely to catch the eye. In the Homeric Hymn to Pallas (which was not translated into English by Chapman until a good many years after this play was printed) the subject is the same as that of the Parthenon pediment, namely, the circumstances attending the birth of the goddess. The earthquake and the commotion of the sea are first described, with the shaking of Olympus itself and the amazement of the gods and goddesses thereon ; then comes specially the reining in of his horses by Phœbus to watch the convulsion of nature ; but the Fates are not mentioned at all, although their amazement is one of the most significant things in the legend in marble. Whether Shakespeare had seen some model of the Parthenon, or some good print of it and of its principal sculptures, or some other marble showing the birth of Pallas, it does not appear possible to doubt that the great Athenian legend is the subject of the nonsense verses which are given to Bottom to declaim as a specimen of " 'Ercles' vein."

Inasmuch as the probable source of the central idea of the plot, the magic juice of a flower, does not appear to have been available, in the translation of Wilson made for Lord Southampton, until the spring of 1596, we should have to date much of the work upon the play after Southampton's return from the Spanish voyage in the summer of that year. This date for the composition would suit the hypothesis which I now advance, that 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' is the comedy originally produced at Henslowe's theatre on 11th May 1597, under the name of 'The Humours.' Henslowe had already produced, in the Christmas holidays of 1593-94, a fairy play called *Huon of Bordeaux*, based on the old romance which contains the original of Oberon, king of the fairies ; and he would have had a good many of the properties required for a fairy piece. (Greene also had used the fairy-lore of Oberon in his *James IV.*

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*of Scotland.)* The evidence that the summer comedy of 1597 was the same which was afterwards called ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ is as follows. It was one of the successful pieces of the day, having been played perhaps twice a week for a good part of the summer, and becoming thereafter a stock piece at the theatre. Its ninth performance was on the 21st of June, which Henslowe has marked on the margin “Midsummer day.” It has often been noticed by the critics that the time of Shakespeare’s plot is not Midsummer, but the last days of April, and May-day; so that the name which it now bears could hardly have been its original name, whatever the occasion of changing it may have been. ‘The Comedy of Humours’ would have been a suitable name for it, as a companion piece to ‘The Comedy of Errors’; for it is just a comedy of errors, with the element of humours or fancies added. The conjecture that Henslowe’s entry of ‘Umers’ may have been Ben Jonson’s *Every Man in his Humour* is improbable on various grounds, including the usually accepted date of Jonson’s play a year later. No other claimant for ‘The Humours’ has ever been proposed, and yet it was so successful at its first production that it must have been a comedy of some note.

These performances of ‘The Comedy of Humours’ in the summer of 1597 bring us near to the date of ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost,’ which was written for the Court festivities at Christmas of that year.<sup>1</sup> It contains

<sup>1</sup> Having given in Chapter III. the facts, as I take them, of the writing of ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ for the private theatricals at Christmas 1597, I shall add here only one point. Dumaine, who is Southampton, comes on in his turn with an ode written to the Lady Katharine, his mistress. He appears to have read twice from his paper, or there were two versions of the ode :

*Dum.* Once more I’ll read the ode that I have writ.  
*Biron.* Once more I’ll mark how love can vary wit.

Biron indeed varied the wit himself, by writing the other version, the only one printed in the text :

On a day—alack the day!—  
Love whose month is ever May, etc.

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a mummery of the Nine Worthies, like Bottom's, and has certain other affinities, including its happy mood, to 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.' To both of them one may apply that admirable judgment of a true Shakespearian critic, Thomas Campbell: "Of all his works the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' leaves the strongest impression on my mind, that this miserable world must have, for once at least, contained a happy man."

## 'ROMEO AND JULIET'

The history of the quartos of 'Romeo and Juliet' is a strange one. In 1597 the play was printed anonymously, with the action nearly the same as we now have it, with the Nurse's part and Mercutio's part perfect, with the two greatest scenes between Romeo and Juliet complete both in feeling and expression, and with the whole conception of the star-crossed lovers fully realised. In 1599 another edition was issued by a different publisher, which has nearly the full Shakespearian text, but is still anonymous. The changes are mostly minor embellishments, with some enlargements in the three last Acts. Much that might have been altered or struck out with advantage has been allowed to stand as originally printed. It is clear that this edition was printed from an acting copy of the company to which the poet belonged, for one of the stage directions is "enter Will Kempe," i.e. the comedian of that name in the part of Peter. From this it should follow that the full text of the speeches which this quarto contains

The original version, Dumaine's own, was :

As it fell upon a day  
In the merry month of May, etc.

This is found in two collections of verse (of greater length in the earlier), namely, in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599) along with other things from 'Love's Labour's Lost,' and in Bodenham's miscellany, *England's Helicon* (1600), in which latter it is signed "Ignoto," being assumed Shakespeare's in the former. Two other contributors use the same signature, printed on a slip pasted over the initials of Master Fulke Greville and Sir Walter Raleigh.

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was in the copy at the play-house. In 1609 there followed a third edition, again anonymous ; and from the text of that there was composed a fourth, which bore no date. One or more copies of the fourth impression have Shakespeare's name, but others want it. The fact has been variously interpreted ; but, according to the precedent of the play, by four collaborators, called *Sir John Oldcastle* (1599), which was ascribed to Shakespeare, perhaps as a joke, until a new title-page was printed, it should mean that the name on the title-page was unauthorised, and was cancelled as soon as the mistake was discovered. The mystery of these quartos will probably never be cleared up by any positive fact. The best hypothesis seems to me to be, that there was a collaborator who had sufficient interest in the play to prevent Shakespeare's name from appearing upon any of the lifetime editions.

'Romeo and Juliet' sprang at once into popularity, and became the most famous play of the day. Although neither of the two first editions bore Shakespeare's name, yet the piece was already known to be by him : the character of Romeo and that of Richard (meaning Gloster?) are named to his credit, along with 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece,' in an epigram printed in 1599 ; and in a satire of the same year Marston refers to 'Romeo and Juliet' as the fashionable piece of the time, but without mentioning an author's name.

The story follows Arthur Brooke's poem *Romeus and Juliet* closely. It is not in the plot, nor in any of the incidents or "business," that we have to look for traces of a collaboration, but in the execution and in the strange history of the quartos. The text of the play, even after the revision which it received before the second quarto (1599), contains a good deal that is unlike Shakespeare. The gross talk of the opening scene is poor wit and serves no purpose. The long speech upon Queen Mab is dragged in merely to be spoken, and is in the same somewhat stiff diction as the speeches

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quoted from 'Edward III.', wanting the grace and ease of the fairy passages in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.' In the second quarto it is actually printed as prose (in italics), and given to Mercutio, having been Benvolio's in the earlier quarto (probably by mistake). Mercutio's talk contains a good deal of merely verbal wit, which differs in quality from Shakespeare's usual punning. There is an instance in these lines (I. iv. 38) :

*Rom.* I'll be a candle-holder and look on.  
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.  
*Mer.* Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word.  
If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire  
Of this sir-reverence love, wherein thou stick'st.

Mercutio's three lines contain as many obscurities, which have taxed the ingenuity of commentators. Francis Douce, who is so often helpful in a difficulty, has explained the pun upon "done" and "dun" to depend firstly upon the proverb "draw Dun out of the mire," meaning a cart-horse; and secondly upon the saying, "the mouse is dun," like "the cat is grey." But no one has been able to explain the "constable's own word," as said of "dun's the mouse." It appears to me to be an allusion to the very popular comedy or farce of that period, *Musedorus*, in which the clown is Mouse, and in which there is a punning use of "constable," as if some one of that name, say Henry Constable, had had something to do with the original authorship of this idyllic comedy. A similar pun upon Henry Constable's name occurs in the earlier text of 'Henry V.', in a scene quite unlike Shakespeare's wit, which I shall claim in the next section for the same collaborator as here, namely, Lord Southampton. The wit is in part indecent, and where it is not indecent it is stiff or forced. One of the French princes, Bourbon, is made to say, in the talk overnight before the battle of Agincourt, "I once writ a sonnet in praise of my horse, and began thus, *Wonder of nature!*" The

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Constable (of France) replies : " I have heard a sonnet begin so in praise of one's mistress." Canon Ainger has pointed out that one of Henry Constable's sonnets to his mistress (1592 or 1594) begins : " Miracle of the world ! " In his final revision of this scene for the folio edition, Shakespeare left the gross talk unchanged, but it is noteworthy that he took the above reply from the Constable of France and gave it to the Dauphin, as if he had wished to obscure the allusion to Henry Constable's sonnet.

Neither the verbal wit nor the particular kind of indelicacy in certain passages of 'Romeo and Juliet' are really characteristic of Shakespeare ; the occurrence of the same in one or two scenes of 'Henry V.' proves nothing against him, as the suspicion of another hand arises there also ; while the same kind of indecency in two places of 'Love's Labour's Lost' may have a similar explanation. Falstaff's grossness is of a different kind, nor is it easy to find instances of suggestive indecency except in the passages mentioned, although the wit of suggestion was peculiarly Shakespeare's wit. It is largely in the mouth of Mercutio that these peculiarities are found (*e.g.* the old hare and the poprin pear) ; and of the part of Mercutio a most instructive story has been preserved by Dryden. It is that Shakespeare, having been asked why he killed Mercutio in the beginning of the Third Act, answered "that he was forced to kill him to prevent being killed by him." Dryden did not see the force of the answer. "But for my part," he goes on, "I cannot find that he was so dangerous a person. I see nothing in him but was so excessively harmless that he might have lived to the end of the play and died in his bed without offence to any one." Shakespeare thought otherwise, and got rid of him so as not to spoil the tragic scenes by his cynical talk. If he had not killed Mercutio, "Mercutio" would have killed him — meaning his collaborator Southampton, whose temper was just Mercutio's.

## QUARTOS OF 'KING HENRY V.'

### 'KING HENRY THE FIFTH'

The great patriotic play of 'Henry V.' shares with 'Romeo and Juliet' the singular distinction of having been published several times (1600, 1602, and 1608) in Shakespeare's lifetime, but always without his name. It differs, however, from the love-tragedy in having had its thoroughly revised and enlarged text kept back until the folio of 1623. Whoever it was that gave the play to the world in quarto (and sold three editions of it in a few years), he not only withheld Shakespeare's name from the title-page, but he was unable to print more than half of the full text. As a work to be read at home, the whole would have been, of course, better than the half; for the omissions include the great choruses at the beginning of each Act, and the two best speeches of the king to his soldiers, as well as the new opening scene by which the transformation is made from the roystering Prince Hal of '1 and 2 Henry IV.' to the all-accomplished statesman, churchman, and general. On comparing the text of the quartos with the perfect text of the folio, it will be seen that the shortness of the former is due to two distinct causes: first, to a good deal of systematic cutting down of needlessly long speeches (the missing passages having been struck out obviously *en bloc*); and secondly, to the non-possession of much desirable matter by the person who published the quarto.

It is the conclusion of Dr. Aldis Wright, after a careful examination of the problem, that the full text, as we have it first printed in 1623, had been written as early as 1599, or before the publication of the first quarto, and that it had been cut down for the acting copy, and printed badly. The marks of cutting down for acting are clear enough in the quarto when compared with the folio. But it is most unlikely that certain of the scenes and speeches, which are not to be found in the quarto, were really omitted in playing the

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piece as the sequel of ‘*2 Henry IV.*’ in 1599. The person who issued the quarto of 1600 was able to give some new matter, on the marriage of Pistol to Nell Quickly, on the death of Falstaff, and on the end of Bardolph and of Nym in the war—new matter which was absolutely necessary for bringing ‘*Henry V.*’ into line with the two parts of ‘*Henry IV.*,’ as if it were the sequel of those ; but in everything else the quarto was the acting copy of an old play of the Battle of Agincourt, with the Pistol and Fluellen scenes complete or nearly so—a play which had been on the boards for a year or two before the first part of ‘*Henry IV.*’ was written.

This assumed original play, beginning with the recital of Henry V.’s claim to the crown of France and exposition of the Salic law, and ending with the king’s wooing of the French Princess (the victory of Agincourt being in the central place), was almost certainly the play of ‘*Harey the V.*,’ which Henslowe, the theatrical manager, entered in his Diary as a new piece, on 28th November 1595. This play had certainly a good run, and drew good houses. The announcement made by a dancer at the end of the Second Part of ‘*Henry IV.*’ (1599), that “if you be not too much cloyed with fat meat, our humble author will continue the story with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair Katharine of France,” ought to mean that the promised sequel, under the title of ‘*Henry V.*,’ was to be the continuation of Shakespeare’s writing just as it was the continuation of historical events. But it may have been the sequel only by adaptation, just as the three originally independent plays of ‘*Henry VI.*’ were made into a sequence, and just as ‘*Henry V.*’ itself is joined to them by a few lines in the epilogue. The ‘*Henry V.*’ of 1599 “continued the story with Sir John in it,” in order to dispose of Sir John, as well as of Bardolph, Nym, and Mistress Quickly, in whose fate the public were interested ; but in respect of Prince Hal as king, and of Pistol and Fluellen, it can be made probable that it was in existence

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for two years before the Falstaff plays. However, the new play announced by the dancer was as good as new, inasmuch as it was rewritten in all the great patriotic speeches and scenes, and was furnished with choruses which serve to link the several parts of the action.<sup>1</sup>

The source or germ of all these Shakespearian plays on Henry IV. and Henry V. was a single play called *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth, containing the Honourable Battell of Agin-Court*, which is believed to have been printed first about the year 1594, and of which there is a copy in the British Museum with the date of 1617. It was performed at the Bull in Bishopsgate, and made famous by the comic part of Derick, played by Dick Tarleton, who died in September 1588. It begins with Prince Hal and his boon-companions Ned (Poins) and Tom, who had been plundering on the king's highway in Kent, and were then within a mile of London. To them enters Sir John Oldcastle, who is called Jockey. They agree to meet at “the old tavern in Eastcheap.” There is a scene at Court in which Henry IV. deliberates with the Lords Exeter and Oxford ; then a scene before the Chief Justice, in which Gadshill, one of Prince Hal's followers, is sentenced for theft ; the prince arrives, and gives the Chief Justice a box on the ear for sentencing his man. Oldcastle shows a mere trace of the peculiar wit that Shakespeare developed so much in him under the same name (afterwards changed to Falstaff), remarking of Henry IV. : “He is a good olde man, God take him to his mercie the sooner !” Prince Hal has an interview with his father on his deathbed, succeeds to the crown, puts up with the old familiarity of Oldcastle (“How now, Harry ?”), but tells Ned (Poins) to mend his manners. This brings us to the eve of the French campaign of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Swinburne says (*op. cit.* p. 104) : “But ‘King Henry V.,’ we may fairly say, is hardly less than transformed ; . . . the general revision of style by which it is at once purified and fortified extends to every nook and corner of the restored and renovated building.”

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1414 : the Archbishop expounds Henry V.'s claim to the French crown ; the prospects of a Scots invasion are mentioned, with the old proverb :

He that will Scotland winne  
Must first with France beginne.

The ambassador arrives from France and delivers the tun of tennis-balls from the Dauphin. Henry answers :

But tell him that instead of balls of leather  
We will toss him balls of brass and iron.

The campaign begins in France ; the French nobles talk broken English ; the battle of Agincourt is fought, with details as in Holinshed. Derick (Dick Tarleton), having accompanied the army to France, is taken prisoner by a Frenchman, whom he tricks cleverly. He explains (like Falstaff) how he got a reputation for valour : "Every day when I went to the field, I would take a straw, and thrust it into my nose, and make my nose bleed." The Princess Katharine enters with her ladies, there is more broken English, and then the wooing by the English king, marked by the same bluntness which Shakespeare's play retained to the last.

This old piece, which contains in outline the action of three of Shakespeare's plays, contains also the germ of the comic part of *Locrine*, John Cobbler and his wife being the originals of Strumbo the cobbler, and his wife Dorothy, with strict resemblance only in the scene where a captain presses the cobbler for the war, and in Strumbo making his nose bleed as Derick does. Also, the Archbishop's argument upon the Plantagenet claim to the French crown (which comes, of course, from Holinshed) reappears in the opening scene of 'Edward III.', as well as of 'Henry V.' Through *Locrine* and 'Edward III.' we get a line to the Shakespeare collaborators, and an opening for the hypothesis that the original 'Henry V.' (produced by Henslowe

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on 28th November 1595) was the joint work of Lord Southampton, Barnabe Barnes, and Shakespeare, and that we have the text of that original in the anonymous quartos of ‘Henry V.,’ with some excisions in the longer speeches, and with the addition of a small number of lines relating to the marriage of Pistol to Mistress Quickly, the death of Falstaff, etc. It is not difficult to assign their respective shares to the three original collaborators. Barnes took the historical framework (from Holinshed), with the laboured exposition of the Salic law and of the succession, in what was originally the opening scene; Southampton took the scenes with the French princes (in one of which the talk is indecent), probably also the broken French and the lesson in English of the Princess Katharine, and the wooing of her by the king, which last, as Mr. Swinburne says, is “less improved and heightened in tone [after the revision of Shakespeare’s supposed work by himself] than we might well have wished and it might well have borne”; while Shakespeare took all the comic scenes with Pistol, Fluellen, etc. One small piece of evidence that Henslowe’s entry of ‘Harey the Fift,’ on 28th November 1595, was the same play which afterwards took its place in Shakespeare’s series as if it had been new in 1599, is that Henslowe enters among the theatrical properties of the Lord Admiral’s men, under the date of 10th March 1599, “i payer of hosse for the Dowlfen”—one pair of hose for the Dauphin (who is made almost a comic part in the scene of the French camp before Agincourt), the date of the inventory, 10th March, being too soon for that production of ‘Henry V.’ which contained the topical allusion to Essex’s expected return from Ireland in the autumn of 1599. Another and more conclusive piece of evidence for the earlier date is, that Pistol’s punishment is mentioned in a book which must have been printed first before 1599, and probably before 1597. This is Nicholas Breton’s *Poste*

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*with a Packet of Mad Letters*, a kind of complete letter-writer not so much for models of correspondence as for amusement and edification in imagined situations. In the 22nd letter Mistress Fubs replies to Master Wyldgoose, who had been trying to frighten her : “Master Wyldgoose, it is not your huftie-tuftie can make me afraid of your big looks ; for I saw the play of Ancient Pistol, where a craking coward was well cudgelled for his knavery.” She had remembered the play by its comic part, and actually calls it by the name of that, as if the king himself had not been so commanding a figure in it as he is now. The original date of this book is not known, the earliest existing copy being of the year 1603, and probably of the third edition. There is, however, internal evidence in the 8th letter that it had been in existence before ‘Romeo and Juliet’ was written. The very natural touch of the Nurse in recalling her own child, who was of an age with Juliet :

Well, Susan is with God ;  
She was too good for me,—

is one that needs no outside source ; but the *hint* of it is found in Breton’s letter upon the death of Susanna : “being too good for this world, she is sure gone to a better” ; while the whole purport of the letter, to deprecate unreasonable grief for the dead, is conveyed closely into the speech of Friar Laurence (in the second quarto), where Juliet is found supposed dead in her bed, ending with the very spirit of cold comfort as in the letter<sup>1</sup> :

<sup>1</sup> “A letter of comfortable advice to a friend, who sorrowed for the death of his love :

“Honest *Alexander*, I heare thou art of late fallen into an extreame melancholy, by reason of the sudden departure of *Susanna* out of this life : for thy sake I am sorry she hath left her passage on this earth, though being too good for this world, she is sure gone to a better ; now if thy mourning could recover her from death, I would willingly beare part of thy passion : but when it doth her no good, and thy selfe much hurt, let not a wilfull humor lead thee into a woefull consumption. Thou knowest

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For though some nature bids us all lament,  
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

The germ of Pistol appears first, as I have maintained in a former chapter, in the comic part of Basilisco, which Shakespeare had written for Kyd's play of *Soliman and Perseda* in 1592. Basilisco and Pistol are both alike drawn from Barnabe Barnes, whose real experiences in the French campaign under Essex in 1591 are satirised by Nash in prose and by Campion in verse, and recalled by himself in the military section of his *Four Books of Offices* (1606). The incident of Fluellen making Pistol eat the leek is likely enough to have been based on one of many stories told of Barnes in Essex's campaign. One of the charges against Essex by the Council, on his return from the war in 1591, was of "trailing a pike," or sharing the work of the common soldiers (which Barnes also records of him in his book of 1606). Pistol meets the king incognito, and addresses him : " Trail'st thou the puissant pike ? " The following description of Pistol by Gower is exactly the account of Barnes given by Nash :

*Gower.* Why, 'tis a gull, a fool, a rogue, that now and then goes to the wars, to grace himself at his return into London under the form of a soldier. And such fellows are perfect in the great commanders' names ; and they will learn you by rote where services were done : at such and such a sconce, at such a breach, at such a convoy ; who came off bravely, who was shot, who disgraced, what terms the enemy stood on ; and this they con perfectly in the phrase of war, which they trick up with new-tuned

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she is senselesse in the grave, and wilt thou therefore be witlesse in the world ? Say love is extreme, and let mee beleeve it ; wilt thou therefore deprive nature of reason ? God forbid," etc.

About the same time (1596) that Shakespeare found this in Breton's *Poste with a Packet*, he wrote for him a copy of verses, signed W. S., to prefix to another of his many books, *Wit's Will or Will's Wit*, beginning with—

What shall I say of gold more than 'tis gold ?

which has an unmistakable sameness with the opening of the 84th Sonnet :

Who is it that says most, which can say more,  
Than this rich praise, that you alone are you ?

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oaths : and what a beard of the general's cut, and a horrid shout of the camp will do among foaming bottles and ale-washed wits, is wonderful to be thought on. But you must learn to know such slanders of the age, or else you may be marvellously mistook.

*Fluellen.* I tell you what, Captain Gower, he is not the man I did take him to be.

This plausible person, found out at length, is both Pistol and Parolles, and the actual Barnabe Barnes. The ridiculing of the latter by Shakespeare in a play for which he probably made the plot, is the same audacious fun as the ridiculing of Barnes under the guise of Strumbo in the first comic scene of his own play of *Locrine*, and again under the guise of Lodowick, the poet-pimp, in 'Edward III.', which was his work in most of the Acts. It is to the same period as those two plays, about 1594-95, that I would assign the Pistol of 'Henry V.', so that he would have been an earlier creation than Falstaff, and attached to Sir John in '2 Henry IV.' and 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' only as a convenient way of keeping a popular part upon the stage.

It was maintained by the late Mr. Richard Simpson that 'Henry V.' showed a political bias and had a political aim, which was that of Lord Essex and his friends. In my view, the relation of the play to Essex is not abstract but picturesque, namely, in the portraiture of King Henry after Essex himself. But if the policy of the latter be discoverable in it also, that would suit my hypothesis of Southampton's share in it. The anti-Scottish feeling is far more obvious in 'Edward III.', and was inspired there, I should suppose, by Southampton. But the historical play which is the most complete, as well as adroit, exposition of the political principles of Southampton and Essex is the one which I have reserved to the end of this group—'Richard II.'

## A POLITICAL PLAY

### 'KING RICHARD THE SECOND'

'Richard II.' is one of a group of three historical plays—the other two being 'Richard III.' and 'Henry IV.' (afterwards 'I Henry IV.')—which were all published originally without the author's name, and all reprinted about a year after (the publisher being the same) as "by William Shakespeare." They were copyrighted by Wise, the publisher, respectively on 29th August 1597, 20th October 1597, and 25th February 1598. The reprints (within a year) were by other printers than those of the original editions, but the texts are virtually the same. Shakespeare's name had appeared only once before on the title-page of a play, 'Love's Labour's Lost' (early in 1598), and his initials as the corrector on that of *Locrine* (1595); while his two poems, 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece,' had always borne his name. Wise, who published the three historical plays mentioned, was also the original publisher of the 'Second Part of Henry IV.' (in 1600). There is therefore no reason to suppose that the omission of the author's name from the first editions of three of the historical plays was without his consent; the history of the title-pages merely means that, after 1598, he found it expedient to affix his name to his work. He did so uniformly thereafter, except in the cases of 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Henry V.' (as well as 'Titus Andronicus,' which is in a different class).

Coleridge pronounced 'Richard II.' to be "the most admirable of Shakespeare's purely historical plays." It is purely a chronicle-history, like 'Richard III.', without any admixture of comedy, as in 'Henry IV.', 'Henry V.', and 'Edward III.' It follows Holinshed closely, and points the same moral of the reign as that chronicler does, namely, that Richard's dethronement was inevitable sooner or later, owing to his arbitrary treatment of princes of the blood royal and of English nobles. The pathos of the king's fall from power, had been

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touched with admirable grace by Samuel Daniel in his *Civil Wars*, from which Shakespeare must have taken hints. Notwithstanding the high praise which Coleridge gives it, any one who will try the experiment of reading it through at a sitting, keeping a lookout for inequalities of merit, will not fail to find them. It is this that probably explains Dr. Johnson's quaint remark on 'Richard II.' : "This play is one of those which Shakespeare has apparently revised." He has revised it because it was not all his own originally, and he has left the marks of the revision. Much of the First Act on the quarrel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, and the lists at Coventry, is Holinshed padded out with verbiage to make blank verse. John of Gaunt's speeches are so various in quality as to be a problem. As to one of them, which contains a monotonous series of puns upon his own name, we may well wonder why it was allowed to stand. The frequent occurrence of passages in rhyme is explained, I believe, by the rule, that Shakespeare found it easier to enliven a dull piece of blank verse by turning it into rhyme, as if he were paraphrasing it, than by treating the matter in an original way. The following are the characteristics assigned to this play in the Clarendon Press edition : "Elaborate conceits, forced antitheses, and verbal puns, besides a stilted, unnatural phraseology and a kind of stiffness in the diction—sentences and clauses being often coincident with the lines." If this had been said of those parts of 'Edward III.' which I have given reasons for assigning to Lord Southampton, most of it would have been exactly true; while the "verbal puns" are true of some parts of 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Henry V.'

When we come to the drawing of character, the inequalities are as marked as is the style. Mr. Swinburne concluded that Shakespeare had devoted himself to King Richard only, and had been negligent with all the rest. He finds the characters of York,

## ‘KING RICHARD II.’

Norfolk, and Aumerle to be always “fitful, shifting, vaporous. . . . They are ghosts, not men.” Yet none, he declares, are more important to the scheme of the play after Richard himself. The scenes in the Fifth Act between the young Aumerle, partisan of the dethroned king, and his father and mother are not only impossible historically, but are hard and unnatural on the one side and hysterical on the other.

The distinguished poet, distinguished also by his studies of the Elizabethan dramatists, calls Act V. Scene iii. “the worst and weakest scene of all. . . . It would be easy, agreeable, and irrational to ascribe, without further evidence than its badness, this misconceived and misshapen scene to some other hand than Shakespeare’s. . . . It is false, wrong, artificial beyond the worst of his bad and boyish work.” And yet, in the scene leading up to it, one comes upon these famous lines, with the unmistakable ring of Shakespeare’s own voice in them :

*York.* As in a theatre the eyes of men,  
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,  
Are idly bent on him that enters next,  
Thinking his prattle to be tedious :  
Even so, or with much more contempt, men’s eyes  
Did scowl on gentle Richard.

Something of that very effect is produced on the reader by those very lines : the grand style ends before long, the well-graced actor goes off, and the tedious prattle begins ; and I am not sure that Shakespeare did not intend a sly joke at the expense of his noble collaborator.

Lastly, as to the political tendency of ‘Richard II.’ That it had a political drift is proved by the fact that part of the plan of Essex and his friends in the conspiracy of February 1601 was to have this tragedy specially resuscitated from among the old plays of the Globe Theatre for the sake of its effect upon the minds of the citizens. It was given, by request, on the afternoon of Saturday, the 7th of February, the conspiracy

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coming to a head the next morning. Augustine Phillips, one of Shakespeare's fellow-actors and his friend, was cited as a witness in the inquiry that followed, and explained that they had been given forty shillings to produce the play, because it was "old and so long out of use" that they would have but a small house at it. None of the Globe people were put on their trial as accessories ; but Shakespeare, in the sonnet which he wrote on the occasion, admits that he had his fears :

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,  
Can yet the lease of my true love control,  
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.

The Queen had said on one occasion, in ironical reference to the discontent at her arbitrary conduct towards individuals, "Do you not know that I am Richard II. ?" Lord Southampton had been especially the object of her intolerance, so far so that she had objected to his appointment by Lord Essex as his General of the Horse in the Irish campaign two years before. In the conspiracy he was Essex's right-hand man ; but it is not easy to say how early in his career he had begun to kick against the Queen's methods of governing, and to sympathise with Essex. The doubts on that point are due to the assertions of Bacon in his official account of the origin of the Essex conspiracy. His argument was, that Essex had been plotting for a long time, but that Southampton had joined him merely on private and domestic grounds : "Having been at some emulations and differences with him in Court in former times, but having married his kinswoman [in 1598] and plunged himself wholly into his fortune, and being his continual associate in Ireland [in 1599], he accounted of him as most assured unto him." This history of Southampton's political sympathies is improbable on the face of it ; inasmuch as he had accompanied Essex, and been "his continual associate" quite as much as in

## ‘THE CONCEIT OF RICHARD II.’

Ireland, on his two voyages of 1596 and 1597. It is indeed on the occasion of the latter voyage that we hear first of ‘Richard II.,’ and from a source which is most significant for the original political design of the play and for the direct personal interest of statesmen in its composition. When the ships were lying at Weymouth, outward bound, Southampton being in command of one of them, Sir Walter Raleigh wrote from that port to Cecil on 6th July 1597 (Cal. State Papers) : “The Lord General [Essex] was wonderful merry at the conceit of Richard II. I hope it will never alter, and shall be glad of it as the true way to our good, quiet, and advancement; and most of all for her sake whose affairs will thereupon find better progression.” There are several points of interest in these few lines. The “conceit of Richard II.” must have been the forthcoming tragedy, which was entered for copyright seven weeks after (29th August) and published anonymously the same year. Cecil must have known what was meant by the conceit, and could have heard of it from Southampton, whom he knew intimately as his father’s ward. But is it not probable that Essex had been “wonderful merry at the conceit” on being told of it for the first time? Raleigh hopes that “it will never alter,” meaning perhaps that Essex’s amused reception of the idea of bringing the precedent of Richard II. before the mind of Elizabeth would become a fixed policy with him. It did become his policy in the years following, and Raleigh turned it against him to his ruin. It was characteristic of Essex to need prompting, and the prompter in the political plot of ‘The Tempest’ is Antonio.

He had also his own occasions for reflecting upon the arbitrary rule of the Queen, who had interfered to prevent his marrying where and when he pleased. The moral of the arbitrary reign of Richard II., leading up to his inevitable deposition, as it is drawn out plainly by Holinshed, was just the subject to attract him. His

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natural disposition was not such as to submit tamely to the arbitrary humours of Elizabeth ; we may take that on the evidence of his friend Sir Charles Davers, who wrote to him (Cal. Cecil MSS., ix. 246) from London in July 1599, at the time when the Queen had ordered his recall from the Irish war, that her Majesty might be the more easily persuaded to alter her mind “if you would be moved to use your own pen in such a style as is no less fit for this time than contrary to your disposition, it being apparent that her Majesty’s ill conceit is as much grounded upon the sternness of your carriage as upon the foundation of any other offence.” The only attraction that the theme of Richard appears to have had for Shakespeare was the idea of the fall of princes and of the sacredness of a crowned head, which had been already an attraction to Marlowe in his *Edward II.* For the rest, we may take ‘Richard II.’ to have been a design of Southampton’s, one of those calculated attempts of Antonio, in ‘The Tempest,’ to

set all hearts i’ the State  
To what tune pleased his ear.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE QUARREL WITH SOUTHAMPTON

NOTHING in Prospero's story of his life is more impressive than the treachery of Antonio. He relates it to Miranda with a laboured care, which recalls Hamlet's injunction to Horatio : "In this harsh world draw thy breath with pain to tell my story." He was wounded in the house of his friend, surprised whilst he was pre-occupied with the bettering of his mind, awakened out of a pleasant dream. It ended in his exile to an island ; and after twelve years, when his enemies are brought thither to have their audit made up, it is still Antonio whose account is hardest to settle. Alonso stands for a somewhat different chapter of his life ; but that he has no wish to reopen :

There, sir, stop :  
Let us not burthen our remembrance with  
A heaviness that's gone.

To understand this parable, it has been necessary to go back to Shakespeare's earlier years in London, and to piece together, as one best can from sources both internal and external, the history of his intimacy with Lord Southampton, and of their collaboration during four years. From all that one can gather, it appears to have been the happiest and most buoyant period of Shakespeare's life. It was followed by a year of separation, owing to Southampton's absence on foreign service and pleasure, during which the great Falstaff plays were written ; and then, in the year 1599, came the crisis in

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the poet's career. If we had only the Sonnets as auto-biographical documents we might suppose that nothing made a deeper impression upon his life than his entanglement with Mistress Fitton ; but 'The Tempest' is his final retrospect, and in that authoritative review the outstanding thing is the quarrel with Southampton. It is related, of course, from his own point of view ; but the feelings of pained surprise and indignation, and the sense of "high wrongs" are to be received as genuine. We have now to find, if we can, the external facts corresponding with that inward crisis.

It is to be observed, that one condition of Shakespeare's dramatic work down to the spring of 1598 was its anonymity. Perhaps that was the understanding with his patron, who may have taken the poet at his word in dedicating *Lucrece* in 1594 : "All that I have to do is yours." After the month of August 1597, when Southampton sailed with Essex on the voyage to the Azores, he was not again at leisure for collaboration in literary work during several years. On his return from the Azores he was about the Court for a few weeks, until he left for Paris in the middle of February 1598, with the embassy of Sir Robert Cecil ; he was travelling with ten servants and six horses, and had leave of absence for two years, intending to visit Italy. As it happened, he spent the next seven months in Paris (all but a few days in August, when he ran over to be married), absorbed in a vortex of gambling and dissipation, which exhausted his means and required the help or counsel of Lord Essex to extricate him. In that interval Shakespeare began to assert himself on his title-pages and otherwise, first in 'Love's Labour's Lost,' thereafter upon new editions of three other plays which had been anonymous up to that time. In the autumn of the same year, 1598, there appeared the most explicit claim that was ever made for him in his lifetime as an universal master of the poetic arts, in the *Palladis Tamia* of Francis Meres, a work which contains a survey of

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contemporary English poetry ; he is mentioned in it nine times, as the author of elegiac and heroic verse, of sugared sonnets among his private friends, and of no fewer than a dozen comedies, histories, and tragedies. Four plays published with his name in a single year, and the bold advertisement through Meres of a round dozen to his credit, must have brought the name of Shakespeare into great and sudden prominence.

When Lord Southampton returned to London in November 1598, embarrassed in his affairs and doubtless in a harder and more cynical mood than usual, he found Shakespeare's name, in Meres's literary gossip, attached with no reserve to several plays, including the famous 'Romeo and Juliet,' which he believed himself to have had no small share in designing and writing. It appears from the 94th Sonnet, written about a year after, that Southampton was the perfect master of his face, one of those who "do not do the things they most do show"; and it may be inferred from that, as well as from the outwardly cordial demeanour of Antonio at the corresponding juncture in 'The Tempest,' that he made no sign of his surprise and dissatisfaction. Shortly after the New Year, 1599, came the death of Spenser, the great funeral in the Abbey, at which the poets bore the pall, and the question who was to be the new Poet Laureate. It appears from the testimonial in verse by Francis Davison to Samuel Daniel, that several did aspire to the Laurel Crown "with hot desire." In the same weeks there was much bustle over the expedition to Ireland under Essex, in which Southampton was nominated by the General to the command of the cavalry. He left London in the end of March, and did not return until October. In that interval the question of the laureateship was virtually settled, or rather it was shelved. Shakespeare's Sonnets make it clear, as I have shown in the second Chapter, that he had been counting on the support of Lord Herbert, who stood at that time high in the Queen's

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favour, and that the apparent reason why his lordship failed him was, that his “countenance” had “filled up the line” or certificate of Samuel Daniel. But it was seen before long, by Daniel himself as well as by others, that his candidature had been only a blind; the expected, perhaps promised, patent for the office and pension was never forthcoming, although Daniel became the quasi-laureate, and was in receipt of some indirect emolument from the Queen. Shakespeare was kept out, but no one else was admitted to the formal dignity, until sixteen years after, when Ben Jonson was appointed by Letters Patent, his great rival being near his end.

The 94th Sonnet is proof enough that Shakespeare had found out, very soon after the disappointment which he expresses ironically to Lord Herbert in the 87th Sonnet, that his secret enemy had been Southampton, and that Lord Herbert had been the instrument of the latter at Court. It is with the help of Alonso that Antonio effects the deposition of Prospero, by a stroke of policy sudden and unexpected :

One midnight  
Fated to the purpose did Antonio open  
The gates of Milan ; and i' the dead of darkness  
The ministers for the purpose hurried thence  
Me and thy crying self,

—the little Miranda, not yet “out three years old” (counting from the publication of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ in 1597). One condition of this singular *coup d'état* was, that Milan should lose its independence—“alas, poor Milan, the dukedom yet unbowed.” Shakespeare was refused (the political allegory requires that he should be deprived of) the poet’s Crown, but it had to be placed in commission so long as he lived. It is this same treatment of the royal emblem of Poetry that explains the inward meaning of one of Hamlet’s mad outbursts of passion. He is speaking ostensibly of his father’s crown, and of Claudius’ usurpation of it; but

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the details are quite inapt to Claudius (the excuse being that Hamlet was in one of his mad fits), inasmuch as that sovereign wore the crown with dignity, and must have been elected to it formally by the Estates of the Realm of Denmark, whether he had poisoned his brother or not :

A vice [*i.e.* fool] of kings,  
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole  
And put it in his pocket! . . .  
A king of shreds and patches.

This is not Claudius, it is some one who lay deeper in Hamlet's thoughts. It was the Laurel Crown which had been upon a shelf since Spenser's death, having been placed in commission so that Shakespeare might not succeed to it ; Southampton had as it were put it in his pocket because he was unable to wear it ; he was "a king of shreds and patches," inasmuch as shreds and patches were all his title to the authorship of the plays. Both in the mad outburst of Hamlet and in the political parable of Prospero, there is a want of *exact* correspondence with the facts of the literary "usurpation," or of Shakespeare's own view of the facts ; but that, of course, is inevitable in an allegorical presentation of them.

Apart from the identification of Lord Southampton with Antonio, the unnatural and treacherous brother of Prospero, there is some external evidence that the friendly relations between Shakespeare and his patron had not continued many years. I shall take first a letter from the Countess of Southampton to her husband, preserved among the Cecil Papers at Hatfield, which was thought of so great interest that it was printed in advance of the still unfinished Calendar. The letter is upon certain business affairs of Lady Rich, with whom the Countess was staying at Lord Essex's house, Chartley, in Staffordshire, and would be of no importance now but for its postscript. She adds, as an item that she

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knew her husband would be interested in, a piece of gossip which had reached her as “a secret,” that “Sir John Falstaff had been made the father of a pretty miller’s thumb [a kind of fish], all head and very little body, by his Mistress Dame Pintpot.” The description is correct to nature for one of those immature births that are sometimes preserved in spirits as museum specimens, in which condition her ladyship had doubtless seen one, perhaps in the back parlour of some apothecary. The gossip is wicked in form, the association of the father with the stage Falstaff being disreputable, and of the mother with Mistress Quickly (Dame Pintpot) degrading. It is fairly certain that by Sir John Falstaff was meant the creator and (as I believe) impersonator of that character, and by his Mistress Dame Pintpot was meant Mistress Fitton, who was a former companion of Mistress Bess Vernon in the Maids’ Chamber at Court during two years or more before she became Countess of Southampton. The date of the letter is the 8th of July, in a year which is not stated but can be brought within a narrow limit by the context. The Countess mentions that Lady Rich had written on the same day to “her brother.” Her only surviving brother was Lord Essex; he was executed in February 1601; Lady Southampton was not married until August 1598; therefore the month of July in which the letter was written must have been either that of 1599 or of 1600. In July of both years Lord Southampton was in Ireland. There is some collateral evidence in favour of 1600; for it has been inferred from the 99th Sonnet (“The forward violet thus did I chide”), and made probable by two references in the Sidney Letters, that the same mishap which befell Mistress Dame Pintpot, befell also Mistress Fitton in the early spring of 1600, the only discrepancy between the somewhat belated gossip and the reality being that it was Lord Herbert who was the father of the still-born progeny and not Sir John Falstaff.

## FICKLE PATRONAGE

Another probable indication of the breach between poet and patron, subject to the same disadvantage as the last in not explicitly naming the parties, is found in one of Drayton's *Eclogues*, which he had rewritten some time after the death of Elizabeth in 1603 ("Eliza when she lived" is a phrase which occurs in the context). He writes bitterly and angrily of his own desertion by his patroness, whom he calls Selena (believed to have been Lucy Harington, Countess of Bedford), and then comes to another case like his own :

No other is the steadfastness of those  
On whom even Nature wills us to rely.  
Frail is it that the elements compose,  
Such is the state of all mortality,  
That, as the humour in the blood doth move,  
Lastly do hate what lately they did love.

So did great Olcon, which a Phœbus seemed,  
Whom all good shepherds gladly flock'd about :  
And as a god of Rowland was esteem'd  
Which to his praise drew all the rural rout.  
For after Rowland as it had been Pan,  
Only to Olcon every shepherd ran.

But he forsakes the herdgroom and his flocks,  
Nor of his bagpipes takes at all no keep,  
But to the stern wolf and deceitful fox  
Leaves the poor shepherd and his harmless sheep.  
And all those rhymes that he of Olcon sung,  
The swain disgraced, participate the wrong.

All that we know of these idyllic names is, that Rowland is Drayton himself. The shepherds are the poets, and the "herdgroom" who is specially marked as the individual forsaken by Olcon was probably a leader amongst them, according to Peele's uses of the word "groom" in the same pastoral imagery. Great Olcon, who seemed a very Apollo, and drew all the poets around him, suggests to me Southampton ; but he may suggest some other noble patron to others—such is our

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subjectivity.<sup>1</sup> At all events, the moral of this particular incident, whether it relates to Southampton and Shakespeare or to some other patron and some other poet, is the same that we find in the allegory of 'The Tempest'—“lastly do hate what lately they did love.”

Thirdly, if Southampton had remained his friend to the end, it is remarkable that nothing should have been said of him in the dedication of the folio of 1623 in his lordship's lifetime. The dedication is to Lord Pembroke, and to his brother and heir Lord Montgomery (who cared for nothing but horses and dogs and to be thought an honest man, according to Clarendon). There must have been some reason for passing over Lord Southampton, the patron of whom Shakespeare once wrote: “The love I dedicate to your lordship is without end.” On the other hand, his affection for Pembroke, and his passionate desire to retain his friendship, are proved beyond question by the Sonnets. The dedication of them eight years after proves that their quarrel had been made up. The dedication of the folio—the marriage of his child and heir Miranda to the heir of Naples—is the fulfilment by his executors of what must have been his expressed wish. The nobleman whom he thus chose to associate with his own fame, although never his patron so far as we know, was the man whom he admired most. As Lord

<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to recall any patron of whom, or to whom, any poet had sung so much as is implied in the line “all those rhymes that he of Olcon sung,” if the words be taken literally. The largest body of such verse is Shakespeare's Sonnets to Lord Pembroke; but the latter was not a patron in the sense that Selena is acknowledged elsewhere by Drayton to have been his; and the Sonnets were not published until three or four years after the latest possible date of this passage. On the other hand, if “rhymes” and “sung” be not taken literally of lyric poetry, the reference might quite well be to parts in plays for which Olcon had been the original. If the rhymes had been sung to Olcon, the reference might easily have been to the dedications of ‘Venus and Adonis’ and ‘Lucrece,’ which continued to be prefixed to the numerous editions of those poems during many years, and would have sounded strangely at length, if the author and his patron had been known to have fallen out. It was not unusual to cancel a dedication in a new edition, if the relations of parties had changed. Daniel did that to Fulke Greville, and Drayton himself to the Countess of Bedford.

## PROOFS OF COOLNESS

Clarendon says of him, he was “the most universally loved and esteemed of any man of that age,” and “as he had a great number of friends, so no man had ever the wickedness to avow himself to be his enemy”—or, in Shakespeare’s case, not his enemy for long.

There is still a fourth proof, which may also be called external evidence, that Shakespeare did not retain the friendship of Southampton. It is found in the somewhat startling discovery that the plot of ‘All’s Well that Ends Well’ is made to follow very closely the behaviour of Lord Southampton in the affair of his marriage with Mistress Bess Vernon in the autumn of 1598. If Count Bertram be Southampton, his lordship does not show to advantage; the portrait is not malicious, but it is unflattering; and it is hardly conceivable that it would have been exhibited in a play if the author had been still on good terms with the supposed subject of it, inasmuch as it recalls the least pleasing side of his character. The same comedy contains also the original portrait of Parolles, whom I have sought to identify with Barnabe Barnes by a large array of internal evidence. Although the proof depends somewhat upon taking Parolles and Bertram together, yet it is more convenient to take out the story of Bertram and Helena and retell it apart.

### BERTRAM AND HELENA

The parts of Bertram and Helena are changed materially from those in the original story of Boccaccio, or in the English version of it. Whenever Shakespeare varies from his originals he may be assumed to have a deep purpose, for the reason that he never practised variation merely for the sake of novelty: he takes from Plutarch and Holinshed almost literally, and in the parallel case of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ he follows the Italian story very closely. The original story in this case was “Beltramo and Giletta.” Giletta is Juliet; and as he had used that name before, he changed it to

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Helena, the name of the lover of Demetrius in ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream,’ as well as the name of one of Juliet’s companions in Verona (all three being probably the same real person). She remains, of course, the daughter of the famous surgeon of Narbonne, deceased, and is found, as in the story, living at the Court of Rousillon ; but in the story the surgeon’s daughter is rich as well as beautiful. She had grown up along with the young count from childhood, the familiar intimacy on her part ripening into love, while on his part there was no such development—a common case. Beltramo goes to Court, with no thought of Giletta’s love for him, and enters on the great world fancy free. Giletta follows him, and forces herself in marriage upon him by the same artifice as in our play. Beltramo’s cavalier desertion of her is natural enough, as he had been tricked into the marriage, and had as little love for her at last as at first. The king knows the circumstances quite well, and is reluctant to fulfil his bargain with Giletta when he sees where her choice has fallen. The marriage is completed formally, and Giletta, in a thoroughly business spirit, goes back to Rousillon, takes possession of her husband’s estate, and administers it in his absence with great success and popularity (there is no old Countess of Rousillon in the original). After a time she goes on the pilgrimage to St. James, not in secret, but with the full knowledge and approval of her subjects, goes through all her adventures at Florence, and returns to Rousillon in due time with two stout boys in her arms, to be received by Beltramo without any hesitation as the mother of his children, and to live with him happily ever after. Beltramo had been merely an unwilling husband, the victim of a trick. No odium attaches to his conduct ; he does not whimper ‘O my Parolles, they have married me !’ having no such evil counsellor near him ; he goes to the wars to escape his wife, but not in the same temper as Bertram. In the last scene he does not

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enter upon a labyrinth of unscrupulous lying in order to clear himself and to embarrass the poor women ; nor is there any project of his marrying another lady, as Bertram is meant to marry the daughter of Lord Lafeu. Shakespeare had his own private intention in making these radical changes. Helena's situation is delicately indicated by her confusion and her mysteriously irrelevant or ambiguous answers, as well as by the passionate talking to herself and other signs of distress which the steward overheard. Bertram, in like manner, is conscious of something else than the inequality and arbitrariness of the marriage, which are the just grievances of Beltramo. His conduct is, for some occult reason, callous and heartless, abetted by Parolles, but excused by no one else. Helena had the entire sympathy of the old countess, who disowns her son for deserting his wife. She was judged worthy of her new station, and was ennobled in her own right by the king. She was commended heartily by the Lord Lafeu for her virtues as well as her beauty ; and she was pitied by Bertram's brother officers, who expressed themselves somewhat plainly about his heartless conduct. Helena's resolution to justify herself before the world, and her patience under mysterious wrongs, make her one of the great Shakespearian heroines ; and the effect is produced by making her husband odious.

Although Shakespeare had a certain real case at the Court of Elizabeth in his mind, namely, that of Lord Southampton and Mistress Bess Vernon, he found it inexpedient, even after an interval of years, to make the part of Bertram quite plain. One mystification is introduced at the outset, which is deep enough to put one on a wrong scent. It is the famous oracle spoken by Helena to Parolles concerning Bertram's going to Court :

There shall your master have a thousand loves,  
A mother and a mistress and a friend,  
A phœnix, captain and an enemy,  
A guide, a goddess, and a sovereign,

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A counsellor, a traitress, and a dear ;  
His humble ambition proud humility ;  
His jarring concord, and his discord dulcet ;  
His faith his sweet disaster ; with a world  
Of pretty fond adoptious christendoms  
That blinking Cupid gossips. Now shall he—  
I know not what he shall. God send him well !  
The court's a learning place.

Warburton pronounced this to be a jargon of nonsense. All oracles are nonsense, for the matter of that ; but this must remain nonsense in every respect, if it be understood of the subsequent career of Bertram, with which it has nothing in common so far as the play goes. It is really the oracle of the Earl of Essex, carefully compacted and knit together in every part. It would be presumptuous to profess knowledge of the meaning of every word ; perhaps the form of the lines is too antithetic for literal exactness ; but the effect of the whole is a true portrait of Essex, drawn by a sympathetic hand. It is plainly meant for some eminent personage at Court, and it suits no one so well as Essex. The phrases, “his sweet disaster,” “proud humility,” “jarring concord,” would alone suffice to mark the man. But nothing else in the part suits Lord Essex ; he married in 1590 the widow of Sir Philip Sidney, the daughter of Walsingham, and although “blinking Cupid” gossiped much about him after his marriage, and as late as the eve of his departure for the Irish campaign in 1599 (see Sidney Letters), he was never really like Count Bertram in relation to his wife, nor indeed in any other relation. The oracle of Essex is spoken upon Bertram to confuse the identity of the latter at the outset : he is Southampton in everything but the oracle of his fate.

The relations between Lord Southampton and his future wife, Elizabeth Vernon, one of the maids-of-honour, were a matter of gossip from about the year 1595, when he was some two-and-twenty years old, until their marriage, in most peculiar circumstances, in

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August 1598. It appears to have been the circumstances of the marriage, and not the fact of the marriage itself, that led to the outburst of the Queen's displeasure and to Southampton's banishment from Court. In the beginning of the year 1598, the situation of parties was curiously like that of Helena and Bertram when the latter was about to leave Rousillon. It is thus described in a letter to Sir Robert Sidney at Flushing from his secretary, Rowland White, in London, 14th January 1598 : "I hear my Lord Southampton goes with Mr. Secretary [Sir R. Cecil] to France, and so onward on his travels ; which course of his doth extremely grieve his Mistress, that she passes her time in weeping and lamenting"—just as the Countess of Rousillon's steward overheard Helena doing, her excess of grief being such that he thought proper to inform his mistress. On 1st February 1598, White writes again : "His fair mistress doth wash her fairest face with too many tears. I pray God his going away bring her to no such infirmity which is, as it were, hereditary to her name." Next day, 2nd February : "It is secretly reported that my Lord Southampton shall be married to his fair Mistress" ; but the report was premature by many months. On 11th February : "My Lord Southampton is gone with Mr. Secretary" to Paris. 12th February : "My Lord Southampton is gone, and hath left behind him a very desolate gentlewoman, that hath almost wept out her fairest eyes."

Lord Southampton remained in Paris after Sir Robert Cecil's return to London. In a letter of 11th July, Sir Charles Davers, writing from Paris, tells Cecil that he had delivered the latter's commendation to my Lord Southampton. His projected visit to Italy was put off for want of money ; he explains in a letter to Essex that he had been in trouble with his creditors before he left London in February. Some time in August Mistress Vernon's situation required her to leave the Court and take up her residence at the house

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of Lord Essex, her cousin. Southampton came over from Paris some time in August, married the lady in secret—one letter (*State Papers' Calendar*, 7th September) says he “solemnised the act himself”—and set off again at once for Margate, accompanied by Sir Thomas German (Jermyn), to cross to France. On 3rd September Cecil wrote to him an official letter by the Queen's command, from the Court at Greenwich : “Her Majesty knows that you came over very lately, and returned again very contemptuously ; that you have also married one of her maids-of-honour without her privity, for which, with other circumstances informed against you, I find her grievously offended ; and she commands me to charge you expressly (all excuses set apart) to repair hither to London, and advertise your arrival without coming to the Court, until her pleasure be known.” On the same date, 3rd September, a warrant charging him to return, signed by the Queen, was issued to T. Edwardes. Southampton's answer, without date or place, was that the letter had reached him “by post,” apparently after a long delay ; that he had been staying “at this place” for some time, awaiting money to carry him farther, “which received, will serve to bring me back to England ; but till then I have no means to stir from hence.” The place was Paris, where his lordship had been gambling in so reckless a fashion as to draw all eyes upon him. News of this reached Sir Robert Cecil in a communication on various topics in French, unsigned, which he endorses “Fr. advis.” The date of it is Sept. 22 1598 (Cal. Hatfield MSS. viii. 358) :—

Que votre Comte de Southampton, qui est du present dans Paris, se en va de tout se ruenir, si on ne le retire de la France dans peu de jours. Car il fait de partyer de 2, 3, et 4000<sup>e</sup> a la paulone [tennis], mesmes le Marechall de Biron dans peu de jours luy gaigna 3000<sup>e</sup>. Un chaqu'un se moque de luy, tellelement que le Comte d'Essex faira un grand coup pour le dit

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Comte de la retirer de bonne heure ; car autrement il perdra tout son bien et reputation, tant en France qu'en Angleterre, dont j'en suis bien marry, schachant que Monseigneur le Comte l'ayme.

Southampton wrote to Lord Essex from Rouen on 16th October, asking for an interview. Other letters followed, from which his movements are not altogether clear. There was a warrant of the Queen out against him, and he found it necessary to approach the Court with secrecy, and under the protection of Essex. Cecil's Paris correspondent mentions the latter as one who could be of service in extricating Southampton from the coil of dissipation in which he was involved.<sup>1</sup> The Countess was at Essex House, where she gave birth to a daughter about the beginning of November. Southampton had to undergo a short imprisonment to purge his contempt, and was debarred the Court.

When the Queen charged Southampton with "returning again very contemptuously" to Paris after his hurried marriage, she was doubtless thinking of the contempt to herself. But "contemptuous" is just the word that one would apply to Bertram's conduct to Helena in leaving her after the marriage, and deceiving her with a lie about joining her in two days. After Mistress Vernon had given up her place as maid-of-honour and retired to Essex House to await her confinement, she is

<sup>1</sup> The facts that Lord Essex was thus actively concerned in helping Southampton out of the embarrassments caused by his follies abroad, and that Sir Thomas German (Jermyn) was the friend who accompanied him to Paris on his return thither after the hurried wedding in August, suggest a meaning for the mysterious initials G. and E. which always follow "First French Lord," or "Captain," and "Second French Lord," or "Captain," in the stage-directions of 'All's Well that Ends Well' as printed in the folio. It has been conjectured that they are the initials of the actors, E. being for Ecclestone. But the list of actors in the folio is for the whole of the plays, and for no particular one; so that the conjecture is extremely vague. It is more reasonable to suppose that the letters in this one instance were used to distinguish to the author, as he wrote, the two real persons whom he figured as the companions, monitors, and sometimes free critics of Bertram. They have important parts, but are not named nor specially enumerated among the *dramatis personæ*: hence the greater need of some private mark in the dialogue.

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reported to have expressed her confidence that Lord Southampton would return "to justify her," which he did either just before or just after the child was born. His conduct to her from first to last, as we see it in the Sidney Letters about the date of his departure for France, and in the newly-printed Cecil Letters for later dates in the same year, is curiously like that of Bertram in the play, and is most like it just in those particulars wherein Shakespeare has departed from the story in Boccaccio's original to suit some private intention. Bertram is the character who gave occasion to the famous aphorism :

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together ; our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not ; and our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our virtues.

On the other hand, Dr. Johnson says : "I cannot reconcile my heart to Bertram, a man noble without generosity, and young without truth ; who marries Helen as a coward, and leaves her as a profligate ; when she is dead by his unkindness, sneaks home to a second marriage, is accused by a woman whom he has wronged, defends himself by falsehood, and is dismissed to happiness."

The moralists are agreed that this is one of the plays in which Shakespeare has violated poetic justice. But, in the first place, his ethics are always empirical : in which respect he is not different from the mass of his countrymen. And secondly, he was dealing with real persons, and with real circumstances which he knew intimately. The name chosen for the comedy, 'All's Well that Ends Well,' appears to have been warranted literally by Lord and Lady Southampton's married life. If the author had contrived his plot so as to punish Bertram he would have gratified the moral prejudices of Dr. Johnson, and at the same time gratified his own, on the supposition that he had any. But, in the personal hypothesis, this play is the best possible evidence that

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOTIVE

he bore no malice ; whoever reads it closely and weighs it well will admit that it obeys the rule of “nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.” None the less, he would hardly have chosen the subject at all had he not been looking at the character of Southampton coldly and from a distance.

Antonio's usurpation in ‘The Tempest’ is described as instigated by ambition and effected by treachery. The real occasion of Southampton's hostility was undoubtedly Shakespeare's assertion of his independence, and of his share in the plays as not only the preponderant one, but the only authorship worth mentioning. If it should seem to us surprising that a young nobleman, with so many other openings and means of gratification, should have resented that, we are allowed to see what may be called the psychological motive, which makes the matter more intelligible. It is not unlike Drayton's explanation of the patron Olcon hating him whom lately he did love, as “the humour in the blood” did move. Prospero describes the rise of enmity as follows :

I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated  
To closeness and the bettering of my mind,  
With that which, but by being so retired,  
O'er-prized all popular rate, in my false brother  
Awaked an evil nature ; and my trust,  
Like a good parent, did beget of him  
A falsehood in its contrary as great  
As my trust was ; which had indeed no limit,  
A confidence sans bound.

But there is an earlier and much more animated account of this strange inversion of feeling, in a play which is otherwise so pleasing an idyll that we are apt to overlook the tragic note in it, namely, ‘As You Like It.’ This was the first opportunity that Shakespeare had of embodying in dramatic form his own deep sense of wrong and injustice after the events of the year 1599, the play having been produced, it is supposed, at the new Globe Theatre on the Bankside in 1600, and being

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the only one that can be probably assigned to that year. Orlando, the outcast in the forest of Arden, is the first sketch of Prospero, the exile on an island ; and as the one is the author himself, so is the other. It will be found that his view of his own position at the time is an important complement to his view of it on looking back, and that he has really given a part of the story of his life under the parable of Orlando.<sup>1</sup>

### ORLANDO

In taking the story from Lodge's *Rosalynd* (1590), he adhered so closely to his original that he was not improbably judged to have infringed the copyright of Lodge's prose romance ; at all events, when 'As You Like It' was entered for copyright on the 4th of August 1600, along with 'Henry V.' and 'Much Ado about Nothing,' all three were ordered "to be staied" ; and whereas copyright was granted to the two others on the 14th and 23rd of the same month, 'As You Like It' is not heard of again until it appears in the folio of 1623, being one of the sixteen plays which were copyrighted for the first time at that date. Apart from changes in the names of the characters, he followed Lodge's well-told tale with as much closeness as was usual with him in taking a plot from Holinshed or Plutarch, or from some Italian collection. But he departed from his original in two or three points, apparently insignificant, and yet of vital importance to his private purpose. Lodge makes the king (who becomes the duke) to embrace the wrestler after his victory, and the peers to "entreat him with all favourable courtesy." But, in the play, the duke is hostile to Orlando after his victory, because he was his father's son ; and this change is the more noticeable that it is

<sup>1</sup> 'As You Like It' is one of the plays in which the author has been suspected of introducing himself, but strangely enough it is with Jaques that he has been identified.

## ORLANDO AND OLIVER

a motive only, nothing turning upon it in the subsequent action. When Orlando returns to his brother Oliver, the occasion arises for developing a much more elaborate motive, of exactly the same kind, of which there is hardly even a hint in the original : the returning wrestler finds merely the door shut against him. Orlando finds his brother filled with an animosity greater than his sovereign's :

Thus must I from the smoke into the smother,  
From tyrant duke unto a tyrant brother.

It is the old domestic, Adam, who meets him outside the house and warns him of the reception that awaits him, of which Orlando appears to have had no suspicion :

Why should you be so fond to overcome  
The bonny priser of the humorous duke ?  
Your praise is come too swiftly home before you.  
Know you not, master, to some kind of men  
Their graces serve them but as enemies ?  
No more do yours ; your virtues, gentle master,  
Are sanctified and holy traitors to you.  
O, what a world is this, when what is comely  
Envenoms him that bears it !

*Orl.* Why, what's the matter ?

*Adam.* O, unhappy youth !  
Come not within these doors ; within this roof  
The enemy of all your graces lives :  
Your brother—no, no brother ; yet the son—  
Yet not the son, I will not call him son  
Of him I was about to call his father—  
Hath heard your praises, and this night he means  
To burn the lodging where you use to lie,  
And you within it : if he fail of that,  
He will have other means to cut you off.

The similarity of this to Antonio's dislike of Prospero is very close. The same notion of the old domestic, that the elder brother was no worthy son of his father, is found in Miranda's answer to Prospero's question, "then tell me if this might be a brother? " :

*Mir.* I should sin  
To think but nobly of my grandmother :  
Good wombs have borne bad sons.

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Steevens, with no theory of Orlando as meant throughout for the author himself, was somehow led to think that two lines in the brother's own confession of his hatred of Orlando in the following passage were descriptive of "Shakespeare himself" (marginal MS. note cited by Dr. Aldis Wright from Steevens's copy of the 4th folio) : "Yet he's gentle, never schooled and yet learned, full of noble device, of all sorts enchantingly beloved." But the *whole* soliloquy of Oliver, which is the same in substance as Adam's warning to Orlando, is an exact anticipation, in 1600, of Antonio's inversion of feeling towards his brother Prospero, as for example :

For my soul, yet I know not why, hates nothing more than he.  
Yet he's gentle, never schooled and yet learned, full of noble device,  
of all sorts enchantingly beloved, and indeed so much in the heart  
of the world, and especially of my own people, who best know him,  
*that I am altogether misprised.*

The last idea is not in 'The Tempest' ; but all the rest is, especially the love of the people for Prospero :

<i>Mir.</i>	<i>Wherefore did they not</i>
<i>That hour destroy us ?</i>	
<i>Pros.</i>	<i>Well demanded, wench :</i>
<i>My tale provokes that question. Dear, they durst not,</i>	
<i>So dear the love my people bore me, nor set</i>	
<i>A mark so bloody on the business.</i>	

Lastly, as it is the honest old counsellor Gonzalo who befriends Prospero in executing the order for his exile, so it is honest old Le Beau (Fulke Greville again) who takes upon him the part of a friend when he is sent officially to dismiss Orlando :

*Le Beau.* Good sir, I do in friendship counsel you  
To leave this place. Albeit you have deserved  
High commendation, true applause and love,  
Yet such is now the duke's condition  
That he misconstrues all that you have done.  
The duke is humorous : what he is indeed,  
More suits you to conceive than I to speak of.

The duke, who is made to be "humorous" contrary to

## ELIZABETH AND SHAKESPEARE

the original story, and therefore to serve some private purpose of the author, is the imperious Elizabeth ; and this passage, I feel sure, is an important one in Shakespeare's story of his life. It is probable, on every ground, that the Queen interested herself directly in the question of the new Laureate in 1599. It was at her instance that the Poet's Pension had been given to Spenser eight years before, according to the well-authenticated tradition, which Landor has based upon in his imaginary conversation between Elizabeth and Burleigh. She must have known Shakespeare quite well by sight, through his frequent appearances on the private stages of the Court, from as early a date as Christmas 1594, when he provided a play along with Burbage and Kemp at Greenwich Palace. There is also every reason to believe the story, that the Queen asked him to exhibit Falstaff "in love," a hard task which he accomplished with so brilliant ingenuity and wit in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' that her Majesty must have recognised the superiority of his genius as well as she knew his face. I suspect that the author himself played Falstaff, both by reason of some of the dialogue with Mrs. Ford (probably played originally by an amateur lady of the Court), and of the references to himself as a player in the 110th Sonnet. By making himself "a motley to the view," and that too in the part of a "beast in love" (which is the idea implied by contrast with the "god in love to whom I am [now] confined"), he must have made it all the more difficult for the Queen to reconcile herself to the thought of him as her laureate poet.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare the epigram "To our English Terence, Mr. Will. Shakespeare," by John Davies (of Hereford), No. 159 of his *Scourge of Folly*, 1610 :

Some say, good Will, which I in sport do sing,  
Hadst thou not played some kingly parts in sport,  
Thou hadst been a companion for a king,  
And been a King among the meaner sort.  
Some others rail, but rail as they think fit,  
Thou hast no railing but a reigning wit.  
And honesty thou sow'st which they do reap,  
So to increase their stock which they do keep.

## THE QUARREL WITH SOUTHAMPTON

There is, however, a more probable reason why the Queen should have been “humorous.” In ‘Twelfth Night,’ which was his next comedy, if not his next play of any kind, after ‘As You Like It,’ the part of Signior Fabian may be taken to be meant for the author of the piece; for at the end Fabian assumes the chief responsibility for the practical joke upon Malvolio, and begs that it

May rather pluck on laughter than revenge.

It appears that Fabian had been previously “brought out of favour with my lady about a bear-baiting here”: which must have been of the same kind as the ensuing baiting of Malvolio, for Sir Toby, referring to that, says: “We’ll have the bear again.” The original bear-baiting which brought him out of favour with my lady was, doubtless, the baiting of Sir Thomas Lucy as Justice Shallow in ‘The Second Part of Henry IV.,’ acted about 1598-99. The introduction of Shallow is a mistake from every point of view: it is the least successful part of the Falstaffian humour, it is a gross caricature of Lucy, and it provoked remonstrances even from the author’s friends, if I am right in my reading of the 110th Sonnet, beginning, “Alas, ’tis true.” Shakespeare saw his mistake after the publication of ‘2 Henry IV.’ in the autumn of 1600 (a few weeks after Lucy’s death); so far so, that in printing ‘The Merry Wives of Windsor’ (which was the earlier play of the two) some two years after (in 1602), he omitted nearly all that relates to Shallow, including the means of identifying him with Lucy by his armorial bearings which we now have in the folio text. The Queen must have been moved by some consideration apart from literary merit, apart also from the jealousy of other poets, and of course apart from the private grudge of Lord Southampton (if she had known that he was behind Lord Herbert), before she withheld the laurel from Shakespeare. Elizabeth was “humorous,” and as Le Beau

## A ROWLAND FOR AN OLIVER

(Fulke Greville) told Orlando, "it more suits you to conceive than I to speak of" what she was.

The names of Orlando and Oliver are borrowed from the saying "a Rowland for an Oliver"; and that is the manly self-reliant spirit of the hero. Orlando, the victorious wrestler, is the same person as Prospero, the potent magician. In the next twelve years he had become prosperous, whence the later name: Fortune was "now my dear lady." He is a prince in bearing, assured of his rightful sovereignty, commanding the respect of the other princes as soon as he reveals himself to their purged eyesight.

In one sense the quarrel with Southampton was the common case of the quarrel of a poet with his patron. But in this instance the poet was not an ordinary genius, inasmuch as he was an excellent man of business, who profited, as is commonly believed, by his patron's money, if he did not profit also by his brains. In the parable of Prospero and Antonio, there is hardly a hint that there was another side of the account; if we could hear Lord Southampton's view of the case, we should probably discover that he attached some value to his share in the collaboration, and that, while he desired to be himself anonymous, he was aggrieved that the plays in question should pass under his collaborator's name. This would have been to take Shakespeare at his unguarded word of 1594: "What I have to do is yours."

## CHAPTER X

### REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST': SECOND SERIES

AMONG Prospero's enemies are included Stephano, the drunken butler of the King of Naples, and Trinculo, a jester, "pied ninny," or "patch," who is also of the king's company. In order to make their enmity on the island actual, they conspire with Caliban to take the life of Prospero : in which plot Stephano is chief, Trinculo an assenting party. Of the nine scenes in the play, three are devoted in great part to this group of "enemies" (especially included as such by Act IV. 265), who furnish the comic element. The fun develops naturally enough, and can be enjoyed after a fashion without knowing what it all meant in the author's mind. But in all three comic scenes the best of the wit, as well as of the fun, is lost without a key ; while the last of them, the stealing of glistening apparel which had been hung upon a clothes-line, has no plain meaning at all, as I suppose most readers will confess.

#### TRINCULO

The key to the comic scenes is the identity of Stephano with Ben Jonson and of Trinculo with John Marston. As the scenes develop, it is Marston who is identified first. Trinculo enters as a storm is brewing, and finds Caliban lying flat on the ground ; he creeps under the monster's gaberdine for shelter. To them

## JOHN MARSTON

enters Stephano singing: a bottle in his hand. The monster, he remarks, has four legs: presently he finds that it has two voices, one of which calls him by his name, "Stephano," and declares,

I am Trinculo—be not afeared—thy good friend Trinculo.

*Steph.* If thou beest Trinculo, come forth: I'll pull thee by the lesser legs; if any be Trinculo's legs, these are they.

This identifies Trinculo with Marston; it was probably meant to identify him, and probably did identify him at the time. It is the old jest about Marston's "little legs," which Ben Jonson made great play with in his *Poetaster* (1601), and an anonymous author in *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1600). Jonson told Drummond that "he had many quarrels with Marston, beat him and took his pistol from him, wrote his *Poetaster* on him: the beginning of them were that Marston represented him on the stage in his youth given to venerie." The representation on the stage here alluded to does not correspond with anything that is known, and it is probable (antecedently as well) that Drummond had taken it up wrong. But the play just mentioned (*Jack Drum*, etc.), which is supposed by R. Simpson to be Marston's, does contain a not less scandalous representation of Ben Jonson, for which it is quite credible that he gave the author a beating. In it the part of Brabant senior corresponds with Ben in every respect, Brabant junior being Marston, who is thus referred to:

*Winif.* Indeed young Brabant is a proper man,  
And yet his legs are somewhat of the least.

In *The Poetaster* he is thus introduced: "That's he in the embroidered hat, there, with the ash-coloured feather; his name is Laberius Crispinus." In Dekker's *Gull's Hornbook* (1609) a gallant at the play is advised that he cannot better revenge himself upon a libellous playwright than by rising with a screwed and discontented face and walking out in the middle of one of his scenes—"if the writer be a fellow that hath either

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

epigrammed you, or hath had a flirt at your mistress, or hath brought either your *feather*, or your red beard, or your little legs, etc., on the stage." *The Poetaster*, having described Marston's (Crispinus') feather, next leads up to his little legs by the following dialogue upon Crispinus' cousin :

*Chloe.* She is a gentlewoman.

*Crispinus.* Or else she should not be my cousin, I assure you.

*Chloe.* Are you a gentleman?

*Crispinus.* That I am, lady ; you shall see mine arms, if you please.

*Chloe.* No, your legs do sufficiently show you are a gentleman born, sir ; for a man borne upon little legs is always a gentleman born.

Therefore when Stephano says of the "lesser legs" of the monster : "If any be Trinculo's legs, these are they," it is the old joke about Marston's little legs. This physical peculiarity of the satirist is not known upon what might be called biographical evidence ; but constructively it is as certain as if we had the measurements. Another point arises from his answer to Stephano : "I am Trinculo—thy good friend Trinculo." This is Marston dedicating the 1604 edition of his *Malcontent* to Ben Jonson, *amico suo candido et cordato*—after Ben had quarrelled with him (once or oftener), beaten him, and taken his pistol from him ! Stephano beats Trinculo in the next scene ; which may be either the original beating or a later unrecorded one.

The coined name of Trinculo conceals a good deal of wit, depending in part upon his identification with Marston. It is a metathesis of *Ventriloc* (Tr[e]incvlo), and its appropriateness lies in the fact that Ariel, invisible, ventriloquises through Trinculo, making him give the lie most persistently—twice to Caliban and the third time to Stephano, who becomes enraged at this apparent contumacy and beats him.<sup>1</sup> The intention of

<sup>1</sup> The part of Ariel must have been written for a boy who could ventriloquise. His gift is used not merely in the comic scene where the voice seems to come from Trinculo, but also in the two songs by which

## MEANING OF 'TRINCULO'

ventriloquising through Trinculo is foreshadowed in the previous Act, where Stephano, finding him under the gaberdine at Caliban's hind quarters, asks, "How camest thou to be the siege of this mooncalf? Can he *vent-Trinculos?*"—a grossness which would not have been there but for the pun in it.

Shakespeare found the word *ventriloques* in Rabelais (*Pantag.* iv. 58), in a passage where it is implied that the voice which issued from the ancient oracles was ventriloquism, on the evidence of Plutarch, *De cessatione orac. antiquorum*, and Hippocrates, *Lib. epidem.* He had been getting up the subject of the ancient oracles for the purpose of 'Winter's Tale' shortly before. But how did he come to associate ventriloquism with Ariel? This is the most curious of these associations of ideas. It goes as far back as one of the greatest of the sonnets, the famous 146th (in which the obvious misprint of the second line is here corrected)<sup>1</sup>:

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,  
—My sins these rebel powers that thee array.

This is the scriptural idea in the 29th of Isaiah, beginning, "Woe to Ariel! to Ariel. . . . And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee." The

Ferdinand was perplexed, the burthen of the one, the watch-dog's bark "Bow-wow," and of the other, the sound of bells "Ding-dong," coming "dispersedly," that is, in the same voice from more than one quarter.

<sup>1</sup> The lines in the original text of 1609 read :

Poore soule the center of my sinfull earth,  
My sinfull earth these rebell powres that thee array.

Malone's note is : "It is manifest that the compositor inadvertently repeated the last three words of the first verse in the beginning of the second, omitting two syllables, which are sufficient to complete the metre. What the omitted words were it is impossible now to determine." It is not only not impossible, but very easy, by following the automatic train of the compositor's mistake : he found "my sins" beginning the second verse, while "my sinful earth" had ended the first, and the recurrence of the same letters as far as "my sin—" led him to repeat the whole of the former phrase. The only surprising thing is that it has remained uncorrected to the present hour.

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suggestion for the sonnet comes, however, much more directly from the Latin of the Vulgate : "Vae Ariel, Ariel . . . Et circumvallabo Ariel . . . Et circumdabo quasi sphaeram in circuito tuo, et faciam contra te aggerem, et munimenta ponam in obsidionem tuam." This is Ariel, the "poor soul" of the sonnet. But the suggestion of Ariel in 'The Tempest' is not only the Ariel of the three first verses of this chapter, but also of the fourth : "And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust." Or, better in the Vulgate : "De terra loqueris, et de humo audietur eloquium tuum, et erit quasi pythonis de terra vox tua, et de humo eloquium tuum musitabit." St. Jerome had used the pagan term *python* which, with its feminine *pythonissa*, was the technical name of the invisible oracle ; Rabelais had supplied the (rationalistic) suggestion of ventriloquism for the python ; and Shakespeare had taken Ariel in either sense just as he required him, uniting in him "an airy spirit" who could do Prospero's errands and ventriloquise when needed, and Prospero's proper soul.

The humour of making the invisible Ariel ventriloquise through Trinculo (who gets a beating in consequence) is farther explained by identifying the latter with Marston. Ben Jonson wrote his comedy *The Poetaster* specially upon Marston (as he told Drummond), and that was at a time when the latter had taken sides with Shakespeare's sympathisers. The answer to it was Dekker's *Satiromastix*, in which Dekker himself is the same Demetrius as in Jonson's play, Marston the same Crispinus, Jonson the same Horace, and Shakespeare an historical anachronism, King William Rufus (a joke upon his tawny hair). Marston, or Crispinus, being for the moment on Shakespeare's side, is made to *speak for* the latter in the matter of the Laurel Crown. Referring

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to Horace, "a dreadful poet taking his degree," King William Rufus speaks from his throne thus :

But in what mould soe'er this man be cast,  
We make him thine, Crispinus : wit and judgment  
Shine in thy numbers ! And thy soul, I know,  
Will not go armed in passion 'gainst the foe.  
*Therefore be thou ourself: whilst ourself sit*  
*But as spectator of this scene of wit.*

(Prospero looks on while Trinculo is made to utter Ariel's voice.) Horace is then dragged in, along with another poet Asinius Bubo (probably Sir John Davies, whom the Queen had made one of her servants in ordinary for his poetic merit), and both are crowned with nettles because they had written stinging epigrams.

## THE DRUNKEN BUTLER

The identity of Stephano with Ben Jonson is as difficult to prove analytically as it is self-evident in relation to other parts and to the whole design ; but some enumeration of the several points in the evidence will be expected. He is a drunken butler in the service of the King of Naples. Drummond, in his notes of conversations with Jonson, says that Lord Pembroke used to send Jonson twenty pounds (more than a hundred of our money) every New Year's day, to buy books with, that "drink is one of the elements in which he liveth," and that "several times he devoured all his books for necessity." Some of Jonson's physical peculiarities are brought into the play. Thus, "and it shall be said so again while Stephano *breathes at nostrils*"—this is "he sounds it so in the nose" of *Satiromastix*, from which source we learn also that his face was "like a rotten russet apple when 'tis bruised." Stephano's manner of "trolling the catch" is cognate with "sounds it so in the nose" and "breathes at nostrils." The matter of his songs is equally appropriate :

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Flout 'em, and cout 'em ;  
And skowt 'em and flout 'em.  
Thought is free ;

—that is exactly Jonson's attitude to his contemporaries. It is Drummond's character of him: "He is a great lover of himself; a contemner and scorner of others; given rather to lose a friend than a jest" (Jonson's own saying about Horace (himself), put into the mouth of Captain Tucca in *The Poetaster*). It is also the common grievance against him in the play *Jack Drum's Entertainment*. At the close, the crest-fallen Brabant is thus addressed by Planet (who has been identified with Shakespeare) :

Why should'st thou take felicitie to gull  
Good honest souls ? And in thy arrogance  
And glorious ostentation of thy wit  
Think God infused all perfection  
Into thy soul alone, and made the rest  
For thee to laugh at ? Now, you Censurer,  
Be the ridiculous subject of *our* mirth.

Stephano's famous sailor-song has more in it than meets the ear :

The master, the swabber, the boatswain and I,  
The gunner and his mate  
Loved Mall, Meg and Marian and Margery,  
But none of us cared for Kate :  
For she had a tongue with a tang, etc.

Jonson's relations with women must have become notorious through his own boastful talk; thus he told Drummond several queer stories about them, adding that his own wife was a shrew, and that he had not bedded with her for five years. She was doubtless the Kate that "none of us cared for." There was only one Kate in those days, "curst Kate," "saucy Kate," Kate the shrew, of the old play 'The Taming of a Shrew,' and of Shakespeare's adaptation. The whole meaning of Mall, Meg, Marian, and Margery, and their respective

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lovers, will always be past finding out. Mall was the name of the wife of Brabant senior (Jonson) in *Jack Drum*, who, not doubting of her chastity, introduces her to a Frenchman by way of a joke, not as his wife, but as a young woman of easy virtue—and discovers that his confidence in her had been misplaced. That was probably the representation of Jonson on the stage, by Marston, to which Drummond alludes. “This is a scurvy tune,” says Stephano, “but here’s my comfort” (*Drinks*).

Lastly, Caliban asks Stephano :

*Cal.* Hast thou dropp’d from heaven ?

*Steph.* Out o’ the moon, I do assure thee : I was the Man i’ the Moon when time was.

*Cal.* I have seen thee in her, and I do adore thee.  
My mistress show’d me thee and thy dog and thy bush.

*The Man in the Moon* is the title of a poem by Drayton, by which nothing more is meant than that there is a man with a lanthorn who pries into all that is going on in the dark corners of the world. But it appears to have had also a political meaning, derived perhaps from Elizabeth as Cynthia, or the Moon. Thus, in another part of ‘The Tempest,’ there is an enigmatic remark, “The Man in the Moon’s too slow,” where the succession to the crown is in question, the meaning perhaps being that Cecil and the other ministers of Elizabeth had failed to the last in their attempts to learn the mind of the Queen. But whatever the phrase meant colloquially, it is applied elsewhere to Ben Jonson, namely, as Horace in *Satiromastix*. Captain Tucca says to him : “My long-heeled Troglodyte, I could make thine ears burn now by dropping into them all those hot oaths to which thyself gavest voluntary fire (when thou wast the Man in the Moon), that thou would’st never squib out any new saltpetre jests against honest Tucca. . . . Yet thou know’st thou hast broke those oaths in print.” Dekker gives in his preface the name of the real person whom Jonson had satirised as Captain Tucca. He is said to

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have been the same whom he had previously satirised as Captain Bobadil in *Every Man in His Humour* (1598); so that Tucca's remonstrance, in the passage cited, may mean that Jonson had promised, when he was the Man in the Moon, not to do it again, but had broken his word by presenting the same character under a new name. After *Every Man in His Humour*, Jonson had been invited to Court; which is perhaps the time "when thou wast the Man in the Moon," and the meaning of his answer to Caliban: "I was the Man in the Moon when time was."<sup>1</sup>

The identity of Stephano hangs together with the identity of Trinculo. If the latter be Marston, for independent reasons given, the former should be Jonson; for the beating that Jonson gave Marston is historical, and it is the same incident that helps to identify the same pair as Ajax and Thersites in 'Troilus and Cressida.'

But it is in the last of the three scenes with Stephano and Trinculo, the scene with the clothes-line hung across the stage, that the probable evidence rises so high as to become sufficient for certainty. The whole business of the clothes-line is unintelligible without Trinculo's key to it, the word "frippery," or old-clothes shop, carrying us back to Ben Jonson's epigram of ten or eleven years before, "Poet Ape," in which he accused Shakespeare of filching so freely from his contemporaries that his "works are e'en the frippery of wit"—the old-clothes shop of wit.

<sup>1</sup> There is probably a more subtle reference in the Man in the Moon "with thy dog and thy bush." The man in the moon carries a faggot on his back, which, according to Chaucer, must have been stolen. Douce (*Illustrations*, p. 10, edition of 1839) thinks so, quoting from the *Testament of Creseid* the following description of the moon:

On her breast a chorle painted ful even,  
Bearing a bush of thorns on his backe,  
Which for his *thefi* might clime no ner the heven.

Perhaps the suggestion is, that Bobadil was an imitation of Falstaff, who was certainly in existence before him on the stage, the name having been already changed from Oldcastle before the first edition of 'Henry IV.' in 1598.

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Shakespeare deferred his revenge until ‘*The Tempest*,’ and then repaid the author of “Poet Ape” with compound interest. That is the real reason why the drunken butler of the King of Naples is one of Prospero’s “enemies,” and why he was providentially on board the ship, so as to be delivered into Prospero’s power. In the first scene, before Stephano has met with Caliban and joined in the conspiracy, Prospero is aware that

By accident most strange, bountiful Fortune,  
Now my dear lady, hath mine enemies  
Brought to this shore.

The drunken butler and the jester, although always kept in a separate class, were two of the five “enemies” in the original design. We may take it that Marston was made an enemy rather as the complement and foil to Jonson than on his own account, just as Essex is included in the other group on account of his relations with Southampton. Jonson is the arch-enemy among the poets ; and the grand cause of enmity is his epigram “Poet Ape,” in which he charged Shakespeare with plagiarism in the most formal and circumstantial terms.

The date of this epigram, which appeared first in print, so far as one knows, in Jonson’s folio of 1616, is about the year 1600. It is referred to in the prologue to *The Poetaster* (1601), and in several passages of *Satiromastix*, which was the immediate answer to that play from the Shakespearian side. It was almost certainly the “vulgar scandal” of Sonnet 112, the date of which would be the winter of 1600-1601 :

Your love and pity doth th’ impression fill  
Which vulgar scandal stamp’d upon my brow ;  
For what care I who calls me well or ill  
So you o'er-green my bad, my good allow ?

In that formal arraignment, Jonson would have been the spokesman of a considerable party. Whether or

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not he acted in conjunction with Lord Southampton, he was dealing with the same matter that had been the ground of his lordship's quarrel with his poet ; and it can hardly be doubted that it was the accusation of plagiarism, from one side and the other, that really kept him out of the Laurel Crown. It had been brought against him as early as 1592 by Robert Greene, who called him "an upstart crow beautified with our feathers." It is always a serious charge, to which the genius of the accused is no sufficient answer, witness the ever-recurring debate over it in the case of Handel. The falcon is a bird of prey, against whom the smaller fowl make common cause. Shakespeare would seem to have had an uneasy conscience about it : "So you o'er-green my bad, my good allow"—hang an ivy bush over the wine-shop door, according to the proverb. The immediate occasion of Ben Jonson's onslaught was probably 'As You Like It' (1600), the plot of which makes free use of the original and distinguished prose romance *Rosalyn*, written by Lodge in 1590 on a voyage to and from the Azores.

If Shakespeare had sometimes an uneasy conscience over his plagiarisms, he had also a very definite and, we shall now think, a not unjust view of the uses of "economy" in playwright's work. He has expressed both the reason and the ethics of it in the following incomparably witty lines of the 59th Sonnet :

If there be nothing new but that which is,  
Hath been before, how are our brains beguiled  
Which, labouring for invention, bear amiss  
The second burthen of a former child !

After that, it is easy to see how incompatible was the temper, how unsympathetic the judgment, of Ben Jonson, in his epigram 'Poet Ape,' which we may assume to have been written under a sense of duty.

## JONSON ON SHAKESPEARE

### POET APE

Poor Poet Ape, that should be thought our chief,  
Whose works are e'en the frippery of wit,  
From brokage is become so bold a thief  
As we, the robb'd, leave rage and pity it.  
At first he made low shifts, would pick and glean,  
Buy the reversion of old plays : now grown  
To a little wealth and credit in the scene,  
He takes up all, makes each man's wit his own :  
And, told of this, he slighted it : "Tut, such crimes  
The sluggish gaping auditor devours ;  
He marks not whose 'twas first ; and after-times  
May judge it to be his, as well as ours."  
Fool ! as if half-eyes will not know a fleece  
From locks of wool, or shreds from the whole piece !

The language is studiously offensive. Jonson printed it in his folio of 1616 amongst the other epigrams in his *Book of Epigrams*, which part of the folio was dedicated to Lord Pembroke, as "the ripest of my studies." None of the epigrams is more carefully constructed than "Poet Ape," and it rises naturally to the mind after reading the following dedication, with its obvious hit at Shakespeare's dedication (by Thorpe) of his Sonnets to Mr. W. H. : "My Lord—While you cannot change your merit, I dare not change your title : it was that made it, and not I. Under which name I here offer to your lordship the ripest of my studies, my Epigrams ; which though they carry danger in the sound, do not therefore seek your shelter ; for when I made them I had nothing in my conscience to expressing of which I did need a cypher." The animus against Shakespeare, and inability to understand his wit, are as great as ever. No one understood Jonson better than Shakespeare himself ; his character of him as Ajax in 'Troilus and Cressida' is not only witty, but also not unfair, according to other evidence : "valiant as the lion, churlish as the bear, slow as the elephant ; a man into whom nature hath so crowded humours that his valour is crushed into folly, his folly sauced with discretion ;

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there is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of, nor any man an attaint but he carries some stain of it." Drummond, after entertaining him three weeks at Hawthornden in January 1619, wrote of him : "He is passionately kind and angry ; careless either to gain or keep ; vindictive, but, *if he be well answered*, [vindictive] against himself." If he did not altogether relish the answer which he got in 'The Tempest,' he cannot but have been lost in admiration of its extraordinary gusto and humour. The clothes-line scene is the answer to "Poet Ape." The humour of it cannot be analysed. What humour it has ever had for readers or spectators without a personal key to it, is a question for each of us individually to answer upon soul and conscience. With the key, the humour gains something of the quality which all true humour should have—obviousness. But the meaning of the clothes-line scene is obvious only in its main drift ; the wit of the particulars can be made only in part intelligible by a diligent study of Dekker's *Satiromastix*, which may be commended to those who are curious. "Put off that gown, Trinculo ; by this hand, I'll have that gown,"—this probably refers to the official gown of the poet, which Stephano assumes : the tradition of the stage gives him also a mock crown from the frippery. "Mistress line, is not this my jerkin? Now, jerkin, you are like to lose your hair and prove a bald jerkin"—this wit is too pregnant. Joseph Hunter says, "I am sure it is not worth searching into. It probably has no positive meaning"—which is hardly polite to the author. A jerkin is an inferior garment to a doublet. A jerkin with or without its hair is a figure of speech which must be explained by the long passage on "hair" and "baldness" introduced into *Satiromastix* with special reference to Horace, or Ben Jonson—a passage which itself needs explanation. A bald jerkin is also a garment that may be worn with either side out indifferently—a coat that can be turned. Lastly, a jerkin which has lost

## THE CLOTHES-LINE SCENE

its hair recalls Ben Jonson's sheepskin in "Poet Ape," from which Shakespeare had snatched the flocks of wool. But any one who essays the thankless task of explaining a joke will agree with Jonson's maxim, quoted with approval from Horace, that it is ill liking stiff jokes—"turpe est difficiles amare nugas." The humour of Stephano swimming ashore upon a butt of sack, which he broached when he had got it into a cave, is the counterpart to that of Prospero being cast adrift in an empty butt. Caliban's worship of him as a divinity will become more intelligible when we discover who the monster was.

## THE BOATSWAIN

Besides the allegorical characters, which are taken in the next chapter, there are only two left to identify—the Master and the Boatswain. The Master is marked by pure negation : he does nothing but tell the Boatswain to speak to the mariners, and then "exit" (Shakespeare's special direction) at the end of the fourth line of the play. On the other hand, the Boatswain is a fellow of enormous energy and resource ; if any man ever deserved to bring his ship off a lee shore, it was surely he. He is most carefully drawn ; in this, as in every other part of the play, there is not a line or a word that had not its purpose in the writer's thought. We are helped to the identity of those two by the company in which they find themselves in Stephano's nautical ditty :

The master, the swabber, the boatswain and I,  
The gunner and his mate.

Here it is the swabber who fixes the attention. No one was entered on a ship's books as swabber ; any of the hands might be set to swab the decks. Swabber in this crew is Decker, honest Tom Dekker, "a dresser of plays" or indeed a swabber of plays. Therefore

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

we are in a company of playwrights. Beaumont and Fletcher may be guessed to be the gunner and his mate, the wit here being made more than obscure. The Master, who does nothing and is only ornamental, is Samuel Daniel, as will be more apparent after the identification of him with Agamemnon in 'Troilus and Cressida' (Chapter XII.). As to the Boatswain, the only way to discover him is to try one playwright after another. The choice should fall at length upon Heywood, who suits the more exactly the more closely the part of the Boatswain is scanned. On the other hand, let one try Middleton, or Webster, or Ford, or Massinger, or Rowley, and I doubt whether any points of association can be found, or a convergence of points, in favour of any one of them.

Heywood was a man of enormous energy. He is said to have acted every day, and he says in a preface that he had "either an entire hand or at least a main finger" in two hundred and twenty plays, which he used to write in taverns ; and after he ceased to write plays, he went on with other work to old age. Of his plays some twenty only are preserved, and the character of these is said to be "enormous bustle : the action never wearies." Among them are three of a nautical cast, "through which blows a salt breeze of the sea." He came from Lincolnshire, and probably from a seaport (if one may infer from his familiarity with sea-subjects), which, if it were Boston, might explain the shortening of the usual "Boatswain" of the text and stage-directions into "Boson" at one place only, where Charles Knight has suspected a punning intention. There is nothing known of his manners or character which would warrant the epithets "insolent," "blasphemous," "incharitable" hurled at him by two of the passengers. On the contrary, he was modest and unambitious as a man, and as a writer remarkably free from vulgarity and coarseness. Lamb's praise of him is generous to a fault: "He was a fellow - actor

## THOMAS HEYWOOD

and fellow-dramatist with Shakespeare. In all those qualities which gained for Shakespeare the attribute of gentle, he was not inferior to him:—generosity, courtesy, temperance in the depths of passion; sweetness, in a word, and gentleness. Christianism, and true hearty Anglicism of feelings shaping that Christianism, shine throughout his beautiful writings in a manner more conspicuous than in those of Shakespeare, but only more conspicuous inasmuch as in Heywood these qualities are primary, in the other subordinate to poetry. I love them both equally, but Shakespeare has most of my wonder.” If the Boatswain’s part be studied, it will be found that his language is always proper, temperate, and as gentle as was consistent with his position in charge of the vessel. When he reappears in the fifth Act, his speech is courteous and hearty. It is only Sebastian and Antonio who discover him to have been a blasphemous, incharitable dog, and insolent noise-maker. The Boatswain is indeed a model of politeness compared with his princely passengers. Their meaning is perhaps to be sought in three plays of Heywood’s—the *Royal King and Loyal Subject*, the *Fair Maid of the West*, and *Fortune by Land and Sea*. Heywood, like Middleton and others, sometimes brought real persons upon the stage with an audacity which is accounted for by the popularity of such exhibitions. The Royal King, although thrown back to the time of the Crusades, has a curious likeness to an arbitrary tyrannical Tudor, such as Henry VIII.; his Loyal Subject has all those qualities which Lamb ascribes to Heywood himself. The Loyal Subject was just the man to exclaim, “What cares these roarers for the name of king?” and to be perfectly loyal all the same. The *Fair Maid of the West* had a special interest for both Essex (Sebastian) and Southampton (Antonio). The fair barmaid of an inn at Plymouth, afterwards landlady of an inn at Fowey, is copied exactly from Southampton’s *Avisa*. She is called Bess Bridges,

## REAL PERSONAGES OF 'THE TEMPEST'

the actual name of the maid-of-honour whom blinking Cupid gossiped so much about in connection with Lord Essex. The play opens with Essex's embarkation at Plymouth on his voyage to the Azores in August 1597, the General himself being a *muta persona* in the first Act. It is to be noted that Antonio calls the Boatswain a pirate :

This wide-chopp'd rascal—would thou mightst lie drowning  
The washing of ten tides !

Pirates were executed at low-water mark on the shore of the Thames at Execution Dock and left to be swished about by the flow and ebb of two tides, or three. The second scene of the fifth Act of Heywood's *Fortune by Land and Sea* is laid "near Execution Dock": enter the sheriff, the marshal of the Admiralty with the silver oar, and the two pirates going to execution. One of the pirates apostrophises the Thames,

whose double tides  
Must overflow our bodies ; and being dead,  
May the clear waves our scandals wash away,  
But keep our valour living.

The meaning of Antonio calling the Boatswain a pirate appears to be, that Heywood had conveyed a plot from Southampton's *Avisa*, his lordship's exaggerated sense of the value of his literary property, and of the enormous amount of piracy which honest Heywood must have practised before he found plots for his couple of hundred plays, being signified by the wish that the "wide-chopped rascal" might lie drowning the washing of *ten* tides. Gonzalo's joke, that they were not destined to be drowned inasmuch as the Boatswain was clearly destined to be hanged, his complexion being "perfect gallows," is given to him as proper to his habit of administering "cold comfort." But here also we find a reminiscence of Heywood's play, *Fortune by Land and Sea*, in which the two pirates going to execution call the hangman the "boatswain."

## CHAPTER XI

### THE ALLEGORIES OF THE ENCHANTED ISLAND

THE least difficult of the allegorical characters is Miranda—she that is to be admired. She is Prospero's offspring, legitimately begotten, and his heir. Looking into "the dark backward and abysm of time," she could remember being tended by four or five women before she and her father were exiled from Milan, but she knew nothing of the exile itself. The "four or five women" are the Shakespearian women to that date—Portia, Juliet, Titania, Helena, and Constance; while Prospero's "and more" would be Rosaline, Beatrice and Hero, Julia and Silvia, Mistress Ford, Mistress Page, and Anne Page, Adriana and Luciana, and more. Miranda could remember these, because they were part of herself; but she could not recall her father's deposition from his dukedom, because it was carried out quietly, was not made an occasion of Prospero's bootless cries, and was not suffered to perturb the mind of the child. Miranda is the offspring of Shakespeare's brain; she is brought up by him in solitude until she arrives at maturity :

Sit still, and hear the last of our sea-sorrow.  
Here in this island we arrived; and here  
Have I, thy schoolmaster, made thee more profit  
Than other princess can, that have more time  
For vainer hours, and tutors not so careful.

Grown to womanhood, she is ready to be married, and

## ALLEGORIES OF THE ISLAND

the alliance is to be with the house of Naples—the cherished project of a Folio of all the plays to be dedicated to Lord Pembroke and his heir, reconciling an old unhappy difference, and consummating to all time a union that lay near to Shakespeare's heart. Although Hemminge and Condell profess to have dedicated the folio to Lords Pembroke and Montgomery of their own choice, it can hardly be doubted that they had been instructed to do so by the author himself.

### THE ENCHANTED ISLAND

The allegory of the Island, and of its original possessors, is intricate and not easily made consistent from every point of view. Prospero gives two series of reminiscences in the beginning of the play, which are difficult to carry out on the stage. The first with Miranda, is to recount how they came to be exiles on an island. The second, with his own spirit, Ariel, is even more enigmatic than the recital of the deposition and exile from the dukedom of Milan: these reminiscences are hardly required to enable the spectator or reader to understand the opening situation and the subsequent action. Sycorax might have been omitted altogether, for anything in the action that turns upon her; Caliban, as a monster, would have been equally intelligible, or unintelligible, if we had learned no particulars of who his dam was. Ariel's own antecedents are not essential to be known; it is enough that he is Prospero's minister, "an airy spirit" to do his errands for the particular occasion. But many things are told of Sycorax, Caliban, and Ariel with a minute particularity, every word of which was weighed well and meant something to the writer. It is impossible to account for all these details unless in the hypothesis that those parts of the play are an allegory. Every one who professes to see more in Shakespeare than lies on the surface will of course be set down as a finder of

## FROM 'ORLANDO FURIOSO'

mares' nests. But what if the mares' nests are there? The play is as full of enigmas as Prospero's island was

full of noises,  
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.

The several scenes of 'The Tempest' are like the Sonnets in another figure of speech :—gems which give out a various radiance, diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, and opals, revealing ever new meanings in new aspects.

It is not so very difficult to see his drift at least, inasmuch as he obeys the same association of ideas that is the law of all our minds. Mr. Walter Whiter, of Cambridge, published in 1794 *An Attempt to explain and illustrate Various Passages of Shakespeare on a New Principle of Criticism, derived from Mr. Locke's Doctrine of the Association of Ideas*. It is indeed the only principle which has any chance of success. One of the simplest applications of it, which will be objected to by none, is to discover his sources, or to find out what books he used. The book that he was using when he drew up a plan of 'The Tempest' was undoubtedly Sir John Harington's translation in English verse of the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto, published in 1591 in a handsome folio, it is believed at the instance of the Queen, who was Harington's godmother. It is an excellent example of English printing, and hardly less creditable as an example of the smoothness, flexibility, and rhythmical ease of the English tongue.<sup>1</sup> Joseph

<sup>1</sup> It can be made probable, on several grounds, that Sir John Harington was the original of Sir Toby Belch, and that the "manakin" Sir Andrew Aguecheek is Sir John Davies, the author of *Orchestra; or A Poeme of Dancing*, upon which Harington made an epigram. The wit and humour of 'Twelfth Night' gain much in point if these and other identities be kept in view. Olivia is in part Elizabeth repining after the death of Essex ; Harington was as much in her confidence in that as any one. Her steward Malvolio is Sir William Knollys. The letters, M, O, A, I, which left Malvolio at "a cold scent," are the initials of the words in one of Harington's titles, *Metamorphosis of Ajax* (a-jakes). Aguecheek's share in the fun was not lessened by the fact that the comedy, when new, was played in the Hall of the Middle Temple, from which Society Davies had been expelled for a cowardly assault in Hall upon Richard Martin,

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Hunter, in 1839, showed that the shipwreck scene with which 'The Tempest' opens had several resemblances to Ariosto's description of a shipwreck in the 41st Canto, which could not possibly be accidental. The Germans have followed up this clue, and it might have been expected that they had found out everything. Meissner, indeed, in his *Untersuchungen über Shakespeare's "Sturm"* (1872), has found, in xlvi. 13-19, a daughter brought up by her father out of sight of men, whom he supposes the original of Miranda, and in another canto a monster in the sand whom he supposes to be the original of Caliban, together with certain suggestions of Tunis, Argier, etc. This discovery of Miranda may be right; but Caliban is discovered in the wrong place. It is in the sixth, seventh, and eighth Cantos of *Orlando Furioso* that the ground-ideas of the allegorical part of 'The Tempest' are to be found; and those sections of the poem appear to have been overlooked as sources, if I may take the recent thesis of Herr Schoembs (1898), written at the instance of Professor Höppel, of Strasburg, as the high-water mark of German research.

The event which brought Shakespeare's designs for 'The Tempest' to maturity was the shipwreck on the Bermudas of the Admiral's ship in the expedition of 1609 sent out by the Virginia Company. The news reached London in 1610, and several accounts followed, down to Strachey's in 1613. Lords Southampton and Pembroke were among the principal proprietors of the Virginia Company; which might have been a reason why Shakespeare put those lords on board the vessel to be wrecked for his ulterior purposes. But it looks as if he

well known and esteemed as a friend of poets (see Chapman's dedication to him). The circumstances of his expulsion, and of his readmission in November 1601, have been given by Lord Stowell in vol. xxix. of *Archaeologia*. It looks as if the performance of 'Twelfth Night' in Hall on Candlemas night, 1602, had been a waggish design to welcome him back. Sir Andrew's career at the Bar was resumed, and he became in time Attorney-General in Ireland. Sir Toby aspired to be Archbishop in the same country, and must have been prepared to qualify, or he would not have solicited the office.

## FROM 'ORLANDO FURIOSO'

had been entertaining the idea of an island with a hermit on it before the actual shipwreck on the Bermudas. Islands were then much in vogue. It was the time when Sancho Panza desired above all things to be the governor of an island. There are three distinct islands in *Orlando Furioso*, which are combined into the one island of 'The Tempest.' The first is the island of the beautiful witch Alcyna, which was situated outside the Pillars of Hercules some twelve-score leagues, and had a climate the same as Prospero's isle, the air being always "temperate and clear" and "the pastures green." Ariosto's Alcyna was a siren resembling in several respects the Dark Lady of Shakespeare's acquaintance. One singular thing in Alcyna was that her hair was yellow, like golden wire, but her eyes black :

Under two arches of most curious fashion  
Stand two black eyes that like two clear suns shine  
Steady in look, but apt to take compassion,—

just like those of the Dark Lady in Sonnet 132. The knight Rogero is caught in her toils, and spends his days in dalliance until he becomes a soft silken person, "himself in nothing but in name," like Tannhäuser in the Venusberg. But some one gives him the ring of Reason, which opens his eyes and shows him the siren changed into a hag, from whom he escapes disenchanted. Alcyna had turned to filth, like a rotten apple. She became misshapen, her complexion wan, her skin wrinkled, her hair scant and grey, her figure shrunk to three horse-shoes high, her teeth lost, her chin meeting her nose, her breath noisome. Alcyna as she appeared to Reason is

The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy  
Was grown into a hoop.

Rogero was not the first who had been enslaved by Alcyna. On his way towards her castle, he had stopped and tied his horse to a tree ; the horse pulling

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at his halter had broken down a branch, from which breach a human voice began to speak. It was the spirit of Astolfo, the English duke, who had been imprisoned in this myrtle by Alcyna when he had grown weary of her. Alcyna is here again Sycorax, who imprisoned Ariel in a cloven pine :

And for thou wast a spirit too delicate  
To act her earthy and abhor'd commands,  
Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,  
By help of her more potent ministers  
And in her most unmitigable rage,  
Into a cloven pine ; within which rift  
Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain  
A dozen years.

The wood of Astolfo's myrtle tree, when burned on the hearth, shed tears, just as Miranda expected the logs would do which Ferdinand was piling. Astolfo's spirit, speaking from the tree, warns Rogero against Alcyna's wiles ; but he proceeds towards her castle, and on his way meets a crowd of caitiffs :

A foul deformed, a brutish cursed crew,  
Bodied like those in antic work devised,  
Monstrous of shape and of an ugly hue,  
Like masking Machachinas all disguised.  
Some look like dogs and some like apes in view,  
Some dreadful look, and some to be despised :  
Shameless young folk, and doting foolish aged,  
Some naked, some drunk, some bedlam-like enraged.

The captain of this honourable band,  
With belly swoln and pufféd, blubberd face,  
Because for drunkenness he could not stand,  
On a Hugh tortoise rode a heavier pace ;  
His sergeants all were round about at hand,  
Each one to do his office in his place ;  
Some wipe the sweat, with fans some make a wind,  
Some stay him up before and some behind.

One of this crew that had his feet and breast  
Of manlike shape, but like unto a hound  
In ears, in neck, in mouth, and all the rest,  
Utters some barking words with currish sound.

## FROM 'ORLANDO FURIOSO'

Here we have a whole series of ideas for 'The Tempest'—the drunkenness of Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban ; Caliban as a monster ; Caliban as Stephano's "lieutenant, or my standard," but too drunk to stand, as Trinculo says. Also "some bedlam" is the suggestion for the distracted state of the princes who were wandering about Prospero's island.

Leaving Alcyna's island, we come to the island of Ebuda, which is the scene of much that passes in *Orlando Furioso*. It was originally inhabited by a king who had an only daughter, innocent and beautiful. She yielded to Proteus, the god of the sea, and was slain by her angry father. Proteus, in revenge, sent a hideous monster, an ork, to frequent the shore of the island and slay the inhabitants. The distressed people consulted the oracle of Apollo, and were advised that guiltless blood must be spilt to avenge the guiltless blood of the slaughtered maid, "Till one be found may with the first compare." Therefore women were daily brought by pirates to the island, to be devoured by the ork. This island of Ebuda, to which women were brought by pirates, becomes the island to which Sycorax was brought "by the sailors" when she was banished from Argier :

This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child  
And here was left by the sailors.

But Alcyna's island is recalled for part of the idea :

Much like in semblance was it to the place  
Where Arethusa used herself to hide,  
Seeking so long her love to have beguil'd  
Till at the last she found herself with child.

Lastly, we come to the third island, on which dwelt a hermit in a cave, a holy man who dealt not in incantations but resorted to prayer. By an angel in his sleep he had prescience of Rogero's coming, just as Prospero had prescience of his enemies' voyage by looking upon his magic book. There is a shipwreck, Ariosto's details

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of which are followed closely by Shakespeare, as Joseph Hunter has pointed out already. There was confusion on board :

Then thought they all hope past, and down they kneel,  
And unto God to take their souls they pray,—

which is “All lost ! to prayers, to prayers, all lost,” in the play. The Master, however, does not give up hope :

Yet did the master by all means assay  
To steer out roomer, or to keep aloof,  
Or at the least to strike sails if they may,  
As in such danger was for their behoof.

Harington has a marginal note : “They that have been at the sea do understand these phrases.” Shakespeare has been justly commended for the accuracy of his seamanship ; but there is little in it that he might not have got from Harington, or he might have taken his hint and gone to them that “do understand these phrases.”

*Boats.* Heigh, my hearts ; cheerly, cheerly, my hearts ! yare, yare ! Take in the topsail. Tend to the master’s whistle. Blow, till thou burst thy wind, if room enough,—

which last is Harington’s quaint adverbial phrase, “steer out roomer.” Again, “Down with the topmast” is “Or at the least to strike sails if they may.”

Once more, in Ariosto’s shipwreck,

Each man therein his life strives to protect,  
Of king nor prince no man takes heed or note ;

which becomes :

*Boats.* Hence ! What cares these roarers for the name of king ?  
To cabin ; silence ! trouble us not !

*Gon.* Good ; yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

*Boats.* None that I love more than myself.

They leap into the boat or into the water, Rogero escaping by swimming “many an hour” ; which is the hint for Stephano’s brag, with some occult meaning in

## THE MAGIC BOOK

the numerical precision : “ I swam, ere I could recover the shore, five-and-thirty leagues off and on.” Rogero climbs up the steep rock, to find on the level ground a cave in which an aged hermit dwelt. The hermit subsisted by “eating berries, drinking water clear”; which is varied to Caliban’s “water with berries in it.” This hermit did not use magic, but prayer; he got prescience by holy dreams, like Ananias in Acts ix. 10. Rogero is brought to penitence, and in that mood is reconciled with Orlando, who has visited the island with a wounded knight to be healed by the hermit. Here we have the idea of penitence as the preliminary to reconciliation, which is of actual importance in Acts IV. and V. of ‘The Tempest.’ Prospero is compounded of this hermit on an island and of Ariosto’s other hermit, who lived in a wood and used magic. He appears first in Canto ii., and again in Canto xlvi. A damsel meets him in the wood, and craves his help to prevent a certain quarrel which was imminent :

Unto her safety promising to look,  
Out of his bag forthwith he drew a book—  
A book of skill and learning so profound  
That of a leaf he had not made an end  
But that there rose a spirit from under ground,  
Whom like a page he doth of arrants send.  
This sprite, by words of secret virtue bound,  
Goes where these knights their combat did intend.

This is Prospero’s magic book, and the spirit from under ground is Ariel (of the 29th of Isaiah), whom he sends upon his “arrants.” The pagan hermit who used magic is seen again at work in xlvi. 34 :

And straight from thence he go’th into the place  
Where he was wont the spirits to conjure,  
—A strong cave, vast, in which there was great space—  
The precepts of his art to put in ure.  
One sprite he calls, etc.

This place of the spirits may be the source of a picturesque touch by Ariel :

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In the deep nook where once  
Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew  
From the still-vex'd Bermoothes.

Prospero throughout the play is that hermit of Ariosto who uses magic ; but he changes in the end to the hermit who uses prayer, namely, in the Epilogue, which we may piously believe to be the last lines from the author's pen :

Now my charms are all o'erthrown,  
And what strength I have's mine own,  
Which is most faint. . . .

Now I want  
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant,  
And my ending is despair,  
Unless I be relieved by prayer,  
Which pierces so that it assaults  
Mercy itself, and frees all faults.

This is the most dexterous of all the transformations of the Ariosto romance, as it passed through the alembic of his own thought ; here, if anywhere, Prospero is Shakespeare himself.

### SYCORAX

Although Sycorax is not one of the characters, nor even essential to the plot, she is an element of great importance in the history of Prospero's spirit. Sycorax is short for Psychorax, or Psyche-Corax, the Raven-Spirit, as Francis Douce was the first to point out, although the derivation had been staring every one in the face in the first words that Caliban utters on the stage :

As wicked dew as c'er my mother brush'd  
*With raven feather* from unwholesome fen.

Douce cited from *Batman uppon Bartholomew* a passage about ravens and dew which had been in Shakespeare's mind. Why this allegorical person should be a raven is a more difficult question. Sycorax stands, as I believe, for more than one woman in the author's experience.

## SYCORAX

As to one of these, Mistress Fitton, she was not only dark, but was actually called the Crow from her bird-like profile. As to another, his wife, I suspect that it was the croaking raven that was meant. Sycorax, as Prospero recalls her to the memory of Ariel, has striking points of likeness to the witch Alcyna in Ariosto's romance, as already pointed out :

*Pros.* Dost thou forget  
From what a torment I did free thee? . . .

*Ari.* I do not, sir.

*Pros.* Thou liest, malignant thing! Hast thou forgot  
The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy  
Was grown into a hoop? Hast thou forgot her?

*Ari.* No, sir.

*Pros.* Thou hast. Where was she born? Speak, tell me.

*Ari.* Sir, in Argier.

*Pros.* O, was she so? I must  
Once in a month recount what thou hast been,  
Which thou forget'st. This damn'd witch Sycorax,  
For mischiefs manifold and sorceries terrible  
To enter human hearing, from Argier,  
Thou know'st, was banished: for one thing she did  
They would not take her life. Is not this true?

*Ari.* Ay, sir.

*Pros.* This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child  
And here was left by the sailors. Thou, my slave,  
As thou report'st thyself, wast then her servant;  
And for thou wast a spirit too delicate  
To act her earthy and abhor'd commands,  
Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,  
By help of her more potent ministers  
And in her most unmitigable rage,  
Into a cloven pine: within which rift  
Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain  
A dozen years; within which space she died  
And left thee there; where thou didst vent thy groans  
As fast as mill-wheels strike. Then was this island—  
Save for the son that she did litter here,  
A freckled whelp hag-born—not honour'd with  
A human shape.

*Ari.* Yes, Caliban her son.

*Pros.* Dull thing, I say so; he that Caliban  
Whom now I keep in service. Thou best know'st  
What torment I did find thee in; thy groans  
Did make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts

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Of ever angry bears : it was a torment  
To lay upon the damn'd, which Sycorax  
Could not again undo ; it was mine art,  
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape  
The pine and let thee out.

*Ari.*

I thank thee, master.

*Pros.* If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak  
And peg thee in his knotty entrails till  
Thou hast howl'd away twelve winters.

The particularity of all this about Sycorax is not for nothing, and ought to arrest the attention. First there is the name itself, derived from the Greek word for raven or crow. Next, it is singular that Prospero should question Ariel's knowledge of her birthplace. He hints plainly that she was *not* born in Argier, although there must have been reason to think so ; the meaning of which is that Sycorax is more than one woman, and that the first Sycorax was not born in Argier. Argier is an archaic form of Algiers, here chosen for the sake of the metathesis *Regia* (only one *r* being taken), which is Latin for the royal household (*Regia domus*). The same connection with the Court is hinted still more plainly in a later statement about Caliban's dam :

His mother was a witch, and one so strong  
That could control the Moon, make flows and ebbs,  
And deal in her command without her power.

The Moon, by virtue of her "command," is a person, and the person of those times who was often called the Moon, or Cynthia, was Queen Elizabeth ; she is known, on one occasion at least, to have shown special favour to her maid-of-honour, Mistress Fitton. But it is in vain to seek particular proof that any one of her household could control the Moon, and deal in her command without her power, or to speculate whether the ebbs and flows had anything to do with Shakespeare's own fortunes.

The most remarkable fact related of Sycorax is that

## SYCORAX AND ARIEL

Ariel was at one time her servant, that his delicacy rebelled against her earthy and abhorred commands, and that he was therefore confined by her in a cloven pine for twelve years, venting his groans with the regularity of the strokes of a mill-wheel.

It was a torment  
To lay upon the damn'd, which Sycorax  
Could not again undo ; it was mine art,  
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape  
The pine and let thee out.

Prospero is severe with his own spirit, Ariel, over this old affair of Sycorax. He accuses Ariel of forgetting, and when Ariel protests, he repeats the charge : "Thou liest, malignant thing!" and once more, after another protest, "Thou hast forgot her." In fine, Prospero says :

I must  
Once in a month recount what thou hast been,  
Which thou forget'st.

This striking phrase, "once in a moneth" (as the old text has it), has puzzled the commentators. But one of them, the excellent antiquary Francis Douce, has indirectly supplied the key to it by his note upon a similar phrase, "a month's mind," in 'Two Gentlemen of Verona', I. ii. 137 : "It alludes to the mind or *remembrance* days of our Popish ancestors. Persons in their wills often directed that in a *month*, or any other specific time from the day of their decease, some solemn office for the repose of their souls, as a mass or dirge, should be performed in the parish church, with a suitable charity or benevolence on the occasion. Polydore Vergil has shown that the custom is of Roman origin ; and he seems to speak of the month's mind as a ceremony peculiar to the English."

Sycorax having shut up Ariel within the cloven pine, "could not again undo" her work, and meanwhile died, leaving the spirit in torment until the end of twelve

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years. Once in a month Prospero was to recall the memory of that time. It was a solemn religious office, to be repeated at intervals for the chastening of Ariel, if not for the repose of Sycorax, Prospero's stern admonition of his own spirit being Shakespeare's self-discipline in certain affairs of his past life. In Prospero's reminiscences with Ariel there are two periods of twelve years each, and a third period in prospect. The spirit is supposed to have been confined in a cloven pine for twelve years before Prospero arrived on the island to let him out. Thereafter he was Prospero's free spirit doing his errands for twelve years, according to the time-scheme of the narrative to Miranda, which brings us to the date of 'The Tempest.' If we take his deposition from the dukedom of Milan, and his exile to the island, to be the loss of the Laurel Crown, the date is the year 1599 ; and the twelve years following upon the island, during which Miranda had grown from a child of three to maturity, bring us to the year 1611, the date of the play. In that reckoning the twelve years of Ariel's imprisonment in the cloven pine should begin at 1587, which is also the approximate date of Shakespeare's becoming an actor. But the malign influence of Sycorax had been at work before ; which should mean that she was a witch of his youth before he left home. Although that seems inconsistent with what is said elsewhere of Sycorax—her residence in Argier (the Court), her power to control the Moon (the Queen), etc.—yet there can be no real inconsistency in the allegory. It was not correct to assume that Sycorax was born in Argier. This is not the least important of the revelations in Prospero's story of his life. It is known that the circumstances of his marriage at eighteen were peculiar ; but they were more complex than his biographers have been willing to recognise, according to the particulars in the note.<sup>1</sup> It was the

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell-Phillipps, on one of his visits to the ecclesiastical records of Worcester, was shown by the keeper of them the following entry : "Item

## SYCORAX AND ARIEL

Sycorax of his early Stratford period who was the cause of his spirit being imprisoned in a cloven pine—that is to say, the wooden frame of a London play-house. The allegory should therefore mean that he left home on account of some domestic trouble. Ariel was a spirit too delicate to obey the “grand hests” of Sycorax, which were doubtless enforced with all the advantage of eight years’ seniority. There is a very feeling picture of domestic discord in another part of ‘*The Tempest*,’ in which De Quincey read, “as in subtle hieroglyphics,” the author’s own experience :

If thou dost break her virgin-knot before  
All sanctimonious ceremonies may  
With full and holy rite be minister’d,  
No sweet aspersion shall the heavens let fall  
To make this contract grow ; but barren hate,  
Sour-eyed disdain and discord shall bestrew  
The union of your bed with weeds so loathly  
That you shall hate it both.

Upon Ariel’s refusal, Sycorax “in her unmitigable rage ”

eodem die [27 November 1582] similis emanavit licentia [*i.e.* matrimonii] inter Willielmum Shaxpere et Annam Whateley de Temple Grafton.” There is no subsequent entry of the marriage bond and licence, issued on the following day, between him and Ann Hathway. Of course Ann Whateley and Ann Hathway were not the same person ; moreover, Temple Grafton is a village and parish half-a-dozen miles distant from Stratford, named in the schedule of the bond as the other woman’s parish. It was on the 28th November that Fulk Sandells and John Richardson entered into their bond of forty pounds. Among the conditions of the bond, according to which it was either to be void and of none effect or else to stand in full force and virtue, the chief one is, “if the said Willm. Shagspere do not proceed to solemnisation of marriage with the said Anne Hathwey, without the consent of hir frinds.” He was forced into the marriage under a heavy penalty ; and the occasion was, because he had gone to Worcester the day before and brought back a licence to marry the woman of his choice, Ann Whateley of Temple Grafton. De Quincey suspected that Ann Hathway had inveigled the youth, so that he came under a moral obligation to marry her. It is this legal fulfilment of a moral obligation that the poet refers to in the *envoi* of the 116th Sonnet :

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error, and upon me proved,  
*I never writ, nor no man ever loved.*

I take “nor no man ever loved” to mean, that the man whom he loved most, his father, had prevailed with him to do the right thing.

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obtained the help "of her more potent ministers," and something followed which resulted in Ariel being shut up for twelve years within a cloven pine. If there were a scene and an open rupture, it is probable that an earlier reference to the same domestic upset is to be found in the enigmatic account of "the earthquake" given in the artless reminiscences of the Nurse in 'Romeo and Juliet.' This earthquake cannot be found in the catalogue of telluric commotions ; it is pointed out, indeed, that there was one at Verona in 1348, which might suit the period of the Montagues and the Capulets in a vague way, and that there was one in England in 1580 ; but there is none which suits the date of "eleven years" before the time of writing, the summer of 1596. The Nurse was sitting in the sun under the Dove-house wall when the earthquake happened : "Shake, quoth the Dove-house, 'twas no need, I trow, to bid me trudge." The Dove-house is a reminiscence of Stratford, the Dovehouse Close, and the Boundary Elm at the end of the Close, being mentioned in a document of 1591. The great Boundary Elm existed to the time of Charles Knight, on the road to Henley-in-Arden, about two or three hundred yards distant in a direct line from the home of the Shakespeares in Henley Street. "Trudge" is not the word that the Nurse should have used for so short a distance. She, or rather he, trudged all the way to London.<sup>1</sup> In Rowe's account, which embodied the

<sup>1</sup> There are several things in the Nurse's reminiscences, besides the Dove-house, which betray Shakespeare's domestic affairs at Stratford. Juliet is not out fourteen on the eve of her marriage ; although Brooke had made her sixteen and Painter eighteen. She had been kept at the breast until she was three, and able to run about. Both have been defended as proper to the latitude of Verona, and as instances of the author's knowledge of and fidelity to North Italian nature. One need not seek any other reason than his wish to make Juliet the same age as his own Susanna, or some nine months older (she was baptized on 26th May 1583) ; and to make the weaning of the child, by means of wormwood on the dug, to symbolise another alienation, also preceded by a course of wormwood, which required the nursing to be three years. The weaning was in progress before the earthquake, and would have been inevitable in any case after it.

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gleanings of Betterton made on a visit to Stratford probably seventy or eighty years after Shakespeare's death, it is said that "he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London." This implies that he came back after a time, and that is how Halliwell-Phillipps understands the matter—that he left home in 1585, but with no intention of going on the stage, nor with any definite prospect at all ; that he was again in Stratford in 1587 (at the time when his assent would have been given to the proposed arrangement of the mortgage on his mother's inheritance of Asbies, in which he had a contingent interest) ; and that he did not become an actor until his return to London in that year, perhaps along with one of the strolling companies which visited the town in the summer and autumn. The twelve years of Ariel's imprisonment in the cloven pine should begin at 1587 if we count back from 1599 as the date of the exile to the Island ; and the date of the earthquake, eleven years before the writing of 'Romeo and Juliet' (the summer of 1596), would correspond with his sudden departure from Stratford in 1585 owing to some great upheaval in his home.

Among the "more potent ministers" of Sycorax, who helped to bring about Ariel's imprisonment in the cloven pine, we should probably include Sir Thomas Lucy, whom tradition associates with the cause of Shakespeare's leaving home. The deer-stealing, although real, must still seem insufficient to account for all that followed. Falstaff admitted frankly, and without the smallest shame, that he had beaten Justice Shallow's men, killed his deer, and broken open his lodge ; but he denied that he had kissed his keeper's daughter. There must have been something more in question than the poaching ; and one may surmise that Sir Thomas, the fatherly Puritan justice of the neighbourhood, had been called in to arbitrate in some domestic matter. It is not incredible that Shakespeare may have borne a grudge

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against Lucy for his judgment in the matter, whatever it was ; but it is necessary to assume that there must have been a fresh occasion of animosity at the time of writing ‘*The Merry Wives of Windsor*’ (probably in 1598), and ‘*The Second Part of Henry IV.*’ (soon after) ; and the nature of the humour in the former play, both with Slender (Francis Thynne of the Heralds’ College) and with Shallow, leads one to suspect that Sir Thomas Lucy had been active in opposing Shakespeare’s application for a grant of arms to his father. I have already pointed out that he probably owed the success of his second application, in 1599, to the good offices of another Warwickshire squire, Fulke Greville : that appears to be the meaning of the “rich garments” which were included by Gonzalo among the stores shipped on board the rotten carcase of the butt.

While the cloven pine is the wooden frame of the playhouse, the knotty entrails of an oak, in which Ariel had the farther prospect of howling away twelve winters after his twelve years of freedom (1599-1611), are the oaken desk or chest in which Prospero kept his papers. The possibility of “more toil” to Ariel was in preparing the great folio for the press. It seems very reasonable to conclude that some necessary work was done upon the manuscripts and printed quartos of the plays during the last years of retirement. Several of them, such as ‘*Julius Cæsar*’ and ‘*The Tempest*,’ have perfect texts. They must have been found in fairly good order to come out so well as they do in the folio. The testimony of Hemminge and Condell, that “we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers,” may mean, of course, that “he never blotted a line,” as Ben Jonson understood it, and as the context implies. Still, the threat of the oaken desk for his spirit, Ariel, during another period of twelve years should mean at least an intention to revise for the press. Strangely enough, the third period of twelve years, from 1611, was fulfilled literally, the folio having been published in

## CALIBAN

1623. It is conceivable that the author may have left directions to delay publication until a certain date. As it happened, the volume appeared just after the death of his widow.

## CALIBAN

Caliban is one of the most difficult and many-sided of the allegories. As an amusing monster he is quite successful on the stage, without any recondite study of what is implied by him. Like Stephano when he first set eyes on him, we recognise his market value as a curiosity of nature ; he would be a fortune in England, or in Naples, to any showman. Here, as in every other part of the comedy, Shakespeare is the master magician, who could both please the public and perplex the philosophers. Renan has written a drama upon Caliban. Robert Browning has read a meaning out of a few lines, just as he has expanded Childe Rowland and the dark Tower. Bishop Warburton has opened up a whole train of thought by his discovery that Caliban is a metathesis of cannibal. In what sense was Caliban a cannibal ? Certainly not in a material sense ; for he appears to have been on the whole a vegetarian, as well as a water-drinker until Stephano made him drunk with sack. If we can discover what Shakespeare meant by Caliban as a cannibal, we shall not be far from understanding the allegory as a whole.

But first we are instructed carefully in the monster's parentage. He was the freckled whelp of Sycorax, who had been brought to the island to be delivered of him. After the death of Sycorax, the island belonged to Caliban by right, so that he always looked upon Prospero as a usurper, and was quite ready to enter into a conspiracy with Stephano to destroy him. The monster had a mother, but no father : for that is the meaning of his being called a moon-calf. On Prospero's first coming to the island, he made much of Caliban, who in turn showed him the fresh springs and other

## ALLEGORIES OF THE ISLAND

things necessary for subsistence. But as years went on, Prospero came to loathe the monster, and the monster to hate Prospero, who used him as a drudge to fetch in firing, clean platters, and the like. When Stephano appeared, Caliban was only too pleased to get a new master, leaving Prospero to get a new man.

Warburton's derivation of Caliban from cannibal really carries us into the bishop's own province of divinity. We get a hint of the sense in which the monster was a cannibal from one of the epithets addressed to him, "Thou earth." The ideas of cannibal and earth had been associated already in one of the greatest of the sonnets, the 146th, the famous apostrophe to the Soul, based upon the apostrophe to Ariel in the 29th chapter of Isaiah. It will be observed that the idea of cannibal is contained in the penultimate line—"Death that feeds on men," cannibal death :

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,  
—My sins these rebel powers that thee array,—  
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,  
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay ?  
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,  
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend ?  
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,  
Eat up thy charge ? is this thy body's end ?  
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,  
And let that pine to aggravate thy store ;  
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross ;  
Within be fed, without be rich no more :  
So shall thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,  
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

Shakespeare's "Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth" is St. Paul's "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" The sonnet is thoroughly Pauline, not at all Platonist : full of the practical doctrine of the spiritualising body, saying nothing of the metaphysics of the disembodied spirit. Like all true professors, he carries his religion into his proper business ; so that Caliban is not merely his own

## CALIBAN

sinful earth, his body of death, but also the rough world  
in which he worked, the gross stage, the vulgar public  
taste, the deformities of human nature :

I pitied thee,  
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour  
One thing or other : when thou didst not, savage,  
Know thine own meaning, but would'st gabble like  
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes  
With words that made them known.

It is a proud claim to have made ; but Shakespeare  
always knew his own value, and the world has endorsed  
his estimate.



**BOOK III**  
**SEQUEL TO THE SONNETS**



## CHAPTER XII

### ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

IN 'The Tempest' Shakespeare-Prospéro is a prince, and the most august figure in all that company. It is an exacting part to play, requiring an actor of genius to enter into the spirit of it ; and one can believe that Macready, who played it often, may have succeeded in being the potent exile without being self-conscious. In more ordinary hands there is always the risk that the stately Prospero may leave upon one the impression of a superior person. Until we come to the Epilogue, we are not suffered to know that he has any human frailties or faults ; he puts them all upon his spirit Ariel ; and having dismissed Ariel, he confesses them in his proper person. The real Shakespeare, in his everyday relations with the other poets of his time, is not in 'The Tempest,' but in 'Troilus and Cressida' ; and there the picture which he draws of himself and of them is not only supremely witty but also highly pleasing, such a picture as this age of his admirers and worshippers may love to dwell upon. He is considerate and polite to Daniel ; cordial and intimate with Chapman ; affectionate towards the aged Churchyard, a survival from the past ; a familiar companion to John Fletcher ; and complimentary to Francis Beaumont on his aspiring and gallant spirit. Even to his inveterate enemy, Ben Jonson, he is not unfair ; and the scurillous Marston he paints no blacker than Marston did himself. Shakespeare is his own Achilles ; and just as Prospero

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

is severe with his spirit Ariel, treating the delicate airy creature with a harshness that seems cruel, so Achilles looks into himself and probes his wounded pride and spleen like an unflinching surgeon.

This outline of the Greek side of the comedy I draw with confidence, because all the parts hang together in their details, as they are exhibited in the sequel. In ‘*Troilus and Cressida*,’ as in ‘*The Tempest*,’ what we require first of all is the key to an enigma; having found the key, the spirit and wit of the whole elaborate design reveal themselves in the course of a moderately attentive study of the text. The antecedent reasons for including this comedy in the limited number of Shakespeare’s enigma-plays are twofold: first, that without a key it leaves the effect of a jest upon the famous Tale of Troy, and of a caricature of one or more of the individual heroes; and secondly, that it is curiously particular, both in incident and characterisation, just where it diverges most from the classical sources. The author has been defended on one or other of two grounds: either that he has interpreted Homer and classical antiquity correctly and with sympathy, but with a philosophic insight so deep as to be misapprehended (two Viennese writers)<sup>1</sup>; or that he has really caricatured the ancient heroes, but has done so inadvertently by trusting to the distorted and scoffing version of Lydgate. The latter hypothesis proceeds on the well-known assumption, that a man of genius is a simpleton; the former is, like many more from the same foreign source, stimulating and informing to an English reader, but inadmissible on grounds of probability. There is a third course open to us with ‘*Troilus and Cressida*,’ the course taken by Mr. Swinburne: to exclaim “O wonderful, wonderful!”

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Adolf Bekk, *Shakespeare und Homer*, Text of *Troilus and Cressida*, with Introduction. Pest und Wien, 1865. Adolf Gelber, *Shakespeare’sche Probleme*, N.F., *Troilus and Cressida*, with Introduction of pp. 72. Wien, 1898. The play was produced at Vienna recently.

## ‘TROILUS AND CRESSIDA’

and give up the problem. “Alike in its most palpable perplexities,” he writes, “and in its most patent splendours, this political and philosophic and poetic problem, this hybrid and hundred-faced and hydra-headed prodigy, at once defies and derides all definitive comment”; it is in vain to seek “to read the riddle of Shakespeare’s design in the procreation of this mysterious and magnificent monster of a play . . . the perplexities of the whole matter seem literally to crowd and thicken upon us at every step.” I venture to say that we have only to find the right key in order to understand the parable as a whole and in nearly all its several parts. Shakespeare himself is Achilles in his tent; the wrath of Achilles is Shakespeare’s wounded pride, because he had been refused the titular leadership, the Laurel Crown, for a certain reason. The Greeks are the poets and thinkers, the Trojans the soldiers and statesmen, or the men of action; the episode of Cressida is brought in to supply the required female element in a play, and is also modernised in keeping with the rest.

When the comedy was first printed in 1609, the publishers recommended it, in a preface, as the most witty production of an author who was celebrated for his wit: “passing full of the palm comical,” the work of a “brain that never undertook anything comical vainly”; one of many witty plays from the same pen, but “amongst all there is none more witty than this”; and, still farther to mark its choice quality, readers will not “like this the less for not being sullied with the smoaky breath of the multitude, but thank fortune for the scape it hath had amongst you”—as if the intention to perform it on the stage had been thwarted. I believe this to be Shakespeare’s own estimate of his work, and that he put forward the publishers to make it, just as he employed Thorpe, in the same year, to father the dedication of the Sonnets. Without a key to the characters, much of the wit is lost: we can see that the wit is there, but we miss the point of it. Is it con-

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

ceivable that readers in 1609 were equally in the dark as to the inward meaning of this elaborately constructed play, "passing full of the palm comical"? It is more reasonable to suppose that it was an open secret amongst the class to whom the preface is addressed.

Dr. Johnson was not of the opinion that Shakespeare kept aloof from the scenic personalities which were so common on the stage in his time; but he has made his judgment unacceptable by dwelling solely upon satire, invective, and private malice: "I am not of opinion that the satire of Shakespeare is so seldom personal. It is of the nature of personal invective to be soon unintelligible; and the author that gratifies private malice—*animam in vulnere ponit*—destroys the future efficacy of his own writings, and sacrifices the esteem of succeeding times to the laughter of a day. It is no wonder, therefore, that the sarcasms which, perhaps, in our author's time, 'set the playhouse in a roar,' are now lost among general reflections." This note was written upon the part of Holofernes in 'Love's Labour's Lost,' which was certainly not a comedy for the roaring playhouse. It would have been more apposite to the unfair satire of Sir Thomas Lucy as Justice Shallow (although that has not lost its efficacy)—an exceptional case of malice which Shakespeare is almost certainly crying *peccavi* for in the 110th Sonnet:

Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,  
Made old offences of affections new :  
Most true it is that I have look'd on truth  
Askance and strangely,

—in making Shallow the associate of Falstaff in drunken orgies, and his dupe.

If Shakespeare had "wanted art" to the extent that Ben Jonson believed, Samuel Johnson might have been right in his prophecy, that our author had "sacrificed the esteem of succeeding times to the laughter of a day."

## 'TROILUS AND CRESSIDA'

The truth is nearly the other way round. He is so deep and subtle in his personalities, whether from caution or from scruples, that the plays which contain them must have owed their popularity to other causes. It is clear from the preface to 'Troilus and Cressida' that it was given out as a pre-eminently witty play, intended for discerning readers, fortunate in having escaped popular applause. A good many persons who read it in 1609 must have found a key to the wit of it before they had finished. It is not difficult to recover the key, even in this distant age, by following the method that has been taken with 'The Tempest.'

The play was probably written in 1602-1603. There is an entry in the Stationers' Register by Roberts, the printer of 'Hamlet' (same year), under the date of 7 February 1603, of "The Booke of Troilus and Cresseda as yt is acted by my Lord Chamberlen's men," followed by the remark, "to print when he hath gotten sufficient authority for it." It was not printed until 1609, and then it appeared that it had never been acted — "never staled with the stage, never clapper-clawed by the palms of the vulgar." In another issue of the same year, 1609, by the same publishers, the leaf with the preface was omitted, and a new title-page printed with the words inserted, "As it was lately acted by the King's Majesty's servants at the Globe." One way of dealing with the difference of the title-pages is to accuse the publishers, Messrs Bonian and Walley, of being pirates and liars: this assumption as to the character of Elizabethan publishers, and the helplessness of authors as well as of Stationers' Hall, is always at the service of certain Shakespearians. But there is no need for it in the present instance. The phrase in the original copyright entry of 1603 is unique: "As it is acted." In all other instances, whether of his copyright entries or of title-pages, the phrase is either "hath been acted," or "was acted," or "was lately acted": there is no exception but this, which may be taken to mean

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that the play was only in rehearsal at the time the entry was made. Several things happened within the next few weeks, which are sufficient to explain why the intended performance at the Globe was not gone on with, without assuming that the licenser stopped it owing to its veiled personalities or to its improprieties. The Queen died in the end of March 1603, and before her funeral was well over, the plague was at such a height that the theatres would be closed according to the rule of thirty deaths per week. We miss the precise data of Henslowe's *Diary* for this plague-period ; but, as we know from him that plague closed his theatres from Midsummer 1592 until Christmas 1593, with the exception of the month of January 1593, it is fairly certain that the very severe plague of 1603 did the same for the latter eight months of the year. The next year was nearly free from plague, and in 1605 it was not severe ; but every year thereafter until 1610 came under the rule of thirty deaths a week for some eight months of the year ; and we know from Dekker's express statement that in 1606 "the doors were locked and the flag taken down." It was possible, no doubt, to have played 'Troilus and Cressida' in 1604 or 1605, or in the mid-winter of other years before 1609, when it was at length produced on the Globe stage. Whatever the reason, it was delayed both in the printing and in the playing until 1609, having been put upon the stage shortly after it was published, and probably on account of the interest which it had evoked amongst readers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following, from *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, 7th edition, by Halliwell-Phillipps, is so characteristic a string of assertions or constructions that I give it in full, emphasising certain words :—

"In February 1603, Roberts, one of the Shakesperian printers, attempted to obtain a licence for an impression of the play of 'Troilus and Cressida,' then in course of representation by the Lord Chamberlain's servants. . . . When that printer applied for a licence for the publication of the new tragedy, he had not obtained, nor is there any reason for believing that he ever succeeded in procuring, the [Globe] Company's sanction to his projected speculation. At all events, Shakespeare's 'Troilus and Cressida' was not printed until early in the year 1609, when two other publishers, Bonian and Walley, having surreptitiously procured a copy, ventured on its publication, and, in the hope of attracting purchasers, they had the audacity to state, in an unusual preface, that it had never been represented on the stage. They even

## MODERN GREEKS AND TROJANS

The ground-plan of the play is to combine the post-Homeric story of Troilus and Cressida (which was one of Chaucer's themes, and was so familiar to the English as to be sung in ballads) with the Homeric and post-Homeric Tale of Troy. The combination had been effected already by Dekker and Chettle, in their play written for Henslowe in 1599, which bore originally the same name but was called *Agamemnon* eventually. But Shakespeare worked over both subjects with an altogether original and deeper purpose. The Greeks and the Trojans were made real for him through their respective modern counterparts : the Greeks were the poets of the day, the Trojans the nobles or statesmen. He could give animation to his plot and witty point to his dialogue by keeping before him a certain group of real persons representing the chiefs of the Greeks, and at least two or three real persons among the Trojans. It would be fanciful to seek for actual counterparts to such characters in the classical story as Priam, Hecuba, Cassandra, and Andromache, on the one side ; or to Calchas, perhaps even to Menelaus, on the other. But it will appear that he had exact "parallel lives" in view for Ajax, Thersites, Agamemnon, Nestor, Ulysses, Achilles, and others among the Greeks ; and for Hector, Æneas, and Troilus among the Trojans. Anticipating the reasons that can be found in the text of the play for the identifications, I give them as follow :

appear to exult in having treacherously obtained a manuscript of the tragedy, but the triumph of their artifices was of brief duration. The deceptive temptations they offered of novelty must have been immediately exposed, and a pressure was no doubt exerted upon them by the Company, who probably withdrew their opposition on payment of compensation ; for by the 28th of January the printers had received a licence from the Lord Chamberlain for the publication. The preface was then entirely cancelled, and the falsity of the assertion that 'Troilus and Cressida' had never been acted was conspicuously admitted by the reissue professing to appear "as it was acted by the King's Majesty's servants at the Globe"

—when, is not stated. The original statement "as it is acted by the Lord Chamberlen's men," Feb. 1603, is not necessarily confirmed by a statement made in 1609 that "it was acted by the King's Majesty's servants," although the two companies were continuous. The plain sense of the two editions the same year is, that the first title-page and the preface were cancelled as inappropriate after the play had been produced on the stage.

# ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

<i>Greek Side</i>	<i>Trojan Side</i>
AJAX . . Ben Jonson.	HECTOR . Late Earl of Essex.
THERSITES . John Marston.	TROILUS . Earl of Pembroke.
ACHILLES . Shakespeare.	ÆNEAS . Fulke Greville.
ULYSSES . George Chapman.	ANTENOR . Sir W. Knollys ?
AGAMEMNON Samuel Daniel.	PANDARUS . Composite.
NESTOR . Thomas Church-yard.	
DIOMED . Francis Beaumont.	
PATROCLUS . John Fletcher.	
MENELAUS . Composite.	

The identifications of Menelaus and Pandarus are perhaps possible, but not helped by any clear hint in the text ; while the identification of every character is out of the question, and not essential to the general hypothesis. The relation between Paris and Helen corresponds closely with that between Lord Mountjoy and Lady Rich at the date of the play. Several traits in Cressida, especially her admiration of Achilles, suggest Shakespeare's quondam mistress, Mistress Fitton. The parts in the Troilus and Cressida episode are the same as in Chaucer, including Diomed and Antenor. Even Antenor, who is not given a single line to speak in the whole play, appears to have had some modern counterpart in the author's mind. As the Trojan princes and commanders pass by on the return from the battle, they are pointed out to Cressida :

*Cres.* Who's that ?

*Pan.* That's Antenor : he has a shrewd wit, I can tell you ; and he is a man good enough : he's one o' the soundest judgements in Troy, whosoever, and a proper man of person.

He was taken prisoner by the Greeks (as in Chaucer), and his ransom was so much an object to the Trojans that they were prepared to give up a son of Priam for him. It is Cressida herself who ransoms him, both in the legend and in this play ; Antenor indeed is brought

## ELIZABETHAN GREEKS AND TROJANS

into Shakespeare's plot with no other object than to be ransomed by the return of Cressida to her father.

The subject of the Trojan War had been brought up by Chapman's translation of part of the *Iliad* in 1598. This may have been the immediate occasion of Dekker and Chettle's play, *Agamemnon*, in 1599, which has not come down in print. The separate story of Troilus and Cressida was a very familiar one in ballads. Thersites, also, had been introduced into English interludes, so as to have become proverbial for a railer. Chapman, in his dedication to Lord Essex, had given a hint for finding modern counterparts to the Homeric heroes by comparing Essex himself with Achilles. It was no great step to apply the same method to other principal characters in the Tale of Troy on either side, and to the respective sides. The ancient contrast of *Tros Tyriusve* had been current in the universities at the time of the Revival of Learning, the Grecians being the friends of the new learning, the Trojans the conservatives or opponents. Again, the Trojans were familiar owing to the old legend of the Brute, which made the first kings of England the descendants of the fugitives from Troy. Elizabeth was "queen of second Troy."

The most relevant contrast, and the one that almost certainly inspired Shakespeare with the main design of his play, was that which Samuel Daniel had drawn out in his masterly poem *Musophilus*, published in 1599. It is in the form of a dialogue between Musophilus, who represents study, art, or thought, and Philocosmus, who represents action and intuitive knowledge of affairs; it is clear that Daniel himself is Musophilus, and it may be inferred from a personal reference at the close, as well as from incidental touches elsewhere (such as the well-known passage upon Stonehenge on "the goodly plain near Wilton"), that Philocosmus was his former pupil, the young Lord Herbert. Out of this dialogue the idea of the two camps of Greeks and Trojans, as the thinkers and poets on the one side, and the soldiers

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

and statesmen on the other, arises naturally, although Daniel does not anywhere call them by those names. Also in the quarrels among the scholars or the poets themselves, Shakespeare would have been familiar with the allegorical use of the Trojan War. The following, by Gabriel Harvey, relates to a quarrel which was not so much an entire Iliad as a Patrocleia, a fight over the body of Robert Greene:

Here is matter enough for a new civil war, or, shall I say? for a new Trojan siege, if this poor letter should fortune to come in print. I deal directly; and I will plainly tell you my fancy, if Titius continue to upbraid Caius with everything and nothing. I neither name Martin Mar-Prelate, nor shame Pap-with-a-hatchet, nor mention any other but Elderton and Greene, two notorious mates, and the very ringleaders of the rhyming and scribbling crew. But Titius, or rather Zoilus in his spiteful vein, will so long flurt at Homer; and Thersites in his peevish mood so long fling at Agamemnon, that they will become extremely odious and intolerable to all good learning and civil government; attempting to pull down or disgrace others without order, must needs finally overthrow themselves without relief.

Assuming that Shakespeare's idea in his dramatic treatment of the Tale of Troy was to make the Greeks the poets and the Trojans the men of affairs, it does not follow that he intended to carry the allegory into every detail of the action; it would have been, indeed, impossible to do so. The legendary action must be followed, with such modifications as could be made in it without marring it; and the allegory of two hostile camps used only for the sake of a natural division, on either side of which there was scope for witty and pointed characterisation of the protagonists. The greatest difficulty was the slaying of Hector, which has been managed by Shakespeare with much ingenuity, but in such a way as to have brought upon him the severest of all the condemnations passed upon his play.

## THE POETS AS THE GREEKS

### THERSITES

Coming to the marks of identity first amongst the Greeks, or the poets, the character that at once makes one suspicious of some private intention is Thersites. He had become proverbial as a railer from the brief sketch of him in the second book of the *Iliad*—a hunchback with a squint, a peaked forehead, a few scanty tufts of wool on his head, and a deformity of the feet, who rails at Agamemnon and gets a beating from Ulysses. That is the original ground of the notoriety of Thersites, and all that Shakespeare found about him in Chapman's *Iliad*. Thersites did not occur at all in the post-Homeric accretions to the Tale of Troy, such as he found in Ovid (*Metam.* xiv.) and in Chaucer and Lydgate. He makes him, for his own reasons, a follower of Ajax, who beats him (it is Ulysses who beats him in the original), so that he goes off to join himself to Achilles; moreover, it is the desertion of Ajax by Thersites, at the instance of Achilles, that is given as the ground of quarrel between those two leaders of the Greeks. Further, Thersites is made a bastard, while a bastard son of Priam, Margareton, is introduced from the post-Homeric legends for no other purpose than to elicit the bastardy of Thersites, for which there is no classical authority. He does not make him a hunchback, nor advert to his squint, or his misshapen head, or his scanty tufts of wool; but brings out certain other physical peculiarities, chiefly the disproportion between his legs and his body.

One phrase used of him—

When rank Thersites opes his mastic jaws—

has arrested the attention of two writers, Mr. Fleay and the late Mr. R. Simpson. The former thought that "mastic," which is an obvious coinage, was taken from the name of Dekker's play *Satiromastix*, the Whip of Satires, and that Thersites was Dekker, a man whom

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

Ben Jonson called "a very simple honest fellow," who was as little a railer as any writer of the time. Simpson guessed that Marston was meant by the "mastic jaws"; and as there was another comedy with a name ending in "mastic," namely *Histriomastix*, or the Whip of Players, which bears the date of 1611 and no author's name, he assumed that Marston was the author, and that it must have been produced originally about the end of Elizabeth's reign, or before the date of 'Troilus and Cressida.' There is not a particle of evidence upon which to ground either of those assumptions, and there is no need for them. John Marston is certainly the railer meant by Thersites; but his "mastic jaws" come from the name "Theriomastix," or Whip of Beasts, by which he subscribes himself, in large capitals, at the end of one of the sections of his satires, *The Scourge of Villany* (1599). The idea of the Whip of Beasts is carried out consistently in Thersites, for he is made to draw his vituperative comparisons of mankind (including himself) from all the great divisions of the animal kingdom and from many different species. Marston was the chief railer of his time. As Minto says of him, "he rails, and then rails at himself for railing; pours forth torrents of abuse upon the objects of his dislike . . . and then vituperates himself no less roundly as a vile, snarling, canker-eaten, rusty cur. . . . He has been stigmatised as the most filthy and scurrilous writer of his time. To the first of these epithets Marston has some claim, but to call him scurrilous conveys an imputation of ill-nature which would be most undeserved." Whether Thersites deserves to be called scurrilous is hardly open to question; but certainly he resembles Marston in vituperating himself. Thus, he proclaims his own bastardy :

*Ther.* What art thou?

*Mar.* A bastard son of Priam's.

*Ther.* I am a bastard too; I love bastards; I am a bastard.

## MARSTON AS THERSITES

begot, bastard instructed, bastard in mind, bastard in valour, in everything illegitimate. One bear will not bite another, and wherefore should one bastard?

Ben Jonson, in *The Poetaster*, which he “wrote upon” Marston, had already hinted at something irregular in the latter’s pedigree. Crispinus, who is Marston, meets Horace, or Ben Jonson, in the Via Sacra, and fastens upon him like a bur. Horace, after enduring him for a time, at length turns to him with the bland question :

*Hor.* Is your mother living, sir?

*Crisp.* Au! convert my thoughts to somewhat else, I pray thee.

*Hor.* You have much of the mother in you, sir. Your father is dead?

*Crisp.* Ay, I thank Jove, and my grandfather too, and all my kinsfolks, and well composed in their urns.

Marston’s “little legs” (see *antea*, p. 273) appear to be pointed at in the epithets applied to Thersites—“cobloaf,” “toadstool,” “stool for a witch”; and perhaps his appearance in general in the epithets “fragment,” “indistinguishable cur,” and “ruinous butt.” Jonson “had many quarrels with him, beat him, and took his pistol from him,” so that Marston on one occasion went over to the side of Shakespeare and assisted in answering *The Poetaster* by *Satiro-mastix*; which corresponds with the incident of Ajax beating Thersites, and the defection of the latter to the service of Achilles. In the dialogue between Ulysses and Nestor (II. iii. 99) this change of allegiance is made much of :

*Nest.* What moves Ajax thus to bay at him [Achilles]?

*Ulyss.* Achilles hath inveigled his fool from him.

*Nest.* Who, Thersites?

*Ulyss.* He.

*Nest.* Then will Ajax lack matter if he have lost his argument.  
[Marston was the subject or occasion of Jonson’s *Poetaster*.]

*Ulyss.* No, you see, *he* is his argument that has his argument.

*Nest.* All the better; their fraction is more our wish than their faction: but it was a strong composure a fool could disunite!

*Ulyss.* The amity that wisdom knits not, folly may easily untie.

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

This is an important revelation of the immediate occasion of the quarrel between Ben Jonson (*Ajax*) and Shakespeare.

Another means of identifying Marston as Thersites is to discover puns upon his name. Marston is not an easy name to pun upon. Ben Jonson tried it in *The Poetaster*, with indifferent success—the heraldic device of a bloody toe, “Mars his toe.” Shakespeare’s attempts appear to be two in number, the first where Thersites exclaims, after Ajax has beaten him, “Mars his idiot! do, rudeness; do, camel” (which is like “Mars of malcontents”—the *Malcontent* being one of Marston’s plays—in ‘*The Merry Wives of Windsor*’). The second, a more elaborate attempt, is in the speech by Ulysses upon Ajax (Ben Jonson) :

Praise him that got thee, she that gave thee suck;  
Famed be thy tutor, and thy parts of nature  
Thrice famed, beyond all erudition:  
But he that disciplined thy arms to fight,  
Let *Mars* divide eternity in *twain*,  
And give him half.

The two last lines are recognised by all the commentators to be nonsense; their *raison d'être* is the pun upon the bisected name of Marston—the best that could be done, better than Jonson’s “Mars his toe.” His Christian name, Jack, is perhaps the explanation of another mysterious epithet applied to him by Ajax—“Mistress Thersites,” the mistress being another name for the jack at bowls. These are the relaxations of mighty minds—*dulce est desipere in loco*.

## AJAX

Ajax is the only one of the Homeric heroes who is made ridiculous in ‘*Troilus and Cressida*.’ The ridicule has been defended on the ground that, in Homer,

## BEN JONSON AS AJAX

Ulysses could never see Ajax without laughing ; but of course Homer does not make a butt of him. It is the habitual treatment of Ajax in this play that has led to the idea, of Gervinus and others, that Shakespeare meant to ridicule Homer or the Trojan war. But there is no lack of dignity in any of the chiefs, excepting Ajax ; and in some of them there is more dignity than Homer allows them. For example, Shakespeare's Achilles has no personal quarrel with Agamemnon, but always treats the King of Men with the politeness due to his titular rank. In like manner Ulysses, the sagacious monitor both of the Greek chiefs in council and of Achilles in private, is given some of the best verse to speak that Shakespeare ever wrote. Nor is old Nestor handled with less gentle humour than by Homer himself. He follows Homer closely also in all those scenes of the three first Acts which are taken from Chapman's *Iliad* so far as it was then translated, being quite Homeric in spirit in the council of the Greek chiefs, in the corresponding council of Priam and his sons, in the challenge of Hector, in the choosing of Ajax by lot to meet him, and in the deputation of the other Greek chiefs to Achilles. But for the extreme licence allowed to Thersites, it is Ajax, and Ajax alone, who is un-Homeric. To get over that striking innovation, Malone supposed that Shakespeare had confused the Telamonian Ajax with the *other* Ajax, whom he would have found in Lydgate as a big blustering fellow. Possibly that was the suggestion ; or the joke upon the name (a-Jakes), as in the Nine Worthies' play in 'Love's Labour's Lost,' may have suggested this hero as the most suitable to his private purpose. But it is clear that he did not inadvertently describe the wrong man ; for he takes from Lydgate himself a special mark of the son of Telamon, namely, that Ajax was half a Trojan, being the son of that sister of Priam who was carried off by Hercules and given in marriage to Telamon—"my sacred aunt," as

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

Hector reminds Ajax when he ceases fighting to recall kinship.

The identity of Ajax with Ben Jonson is involved in the identity of Thersites with Marston, being the same scenic partnership as of Stephano and Trinculo in ‘The Tempest.’ The alliance between the two existed in fact, and had the same vicissitudes as in the two plays. Jonson is characterised best in the following description of Ajax delivered to Cressida before he appears on the scene :

*Alex.* This man, lady, hath robbed many beasts of their particular additions [their distinctive qualities] : he is as valiant as the lion, churlish as the bear, slow as the elephant ; a man into whom nature hath so crowded humours, that his valour is crushed into folly, his folly sauced with discretion : there is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of, nor any man an attaint but he carries some stain of it ; he is melancholy without cause, and merry against the hair ; he hath the joints of everything, but everything so out of joint that he is a gouty Briareus, many hands and no use, or purblind Argus, all eyes and no sight.

This is Shakespeare upon Ben Jonson, which may be compared with Pope upon Addison :

Who would not laugh if such a man there be ?  
Who would not weep if Atticus were he ?

I shall not attempt a detailed proof that Ajax is Ben Jonson. In my opinion, the idea has only to be entertained to be assented to, in reading the scenes between Ajax and Thersites, and the great scene in which the other Greek chiefs “draw” Ajax by flattering him at the expense of Achilles. The likeness will be recognised by those who will recognise it, and will be denied by those who will deny it, assent in such a matter being essentially subjective, and conditional upon a general willingness to see an allegorical purpose in the play as a whole. Credence would depend, further, on the acceptance of the corresponding reading of Stephano and Trinculo in ‘The Tempest.’ The objective point

## SHAKESPEARE AS ACHILLES

common to both is the beating, which is a historical fact in the relations between Ben Jonson and Marston.

### ACHILLES

Achilles can be identified with Shakespeare himself by means of a number of points not to be found in Homer or in Lydgate's post-Homeric legend. The chief departure from Homer is, that Achilles has no quarrel with Agamemnon on account of Briseis, and is never angry with him ; the wrath of Achilles is changed in its very root. He keeps his tent for "strong reasons," two of which are elicited by Ulysses. The first is, that the Greeks have not observed degrees of merit in giving the leadership to Agamemnon : Achilles is the real leader, and he ought to be recognised as such. The second is a very strange reason. The circumstance is not altogether invented by Shakespeare, having a basis in the post-Homeric legend that Achilles was in love with Polyxena, a daughter of Priam and Hecuba, which might have been found in the 13th Book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Golding's translation, 1586). Ulysses surprises Achilles by his knowledge of the fact :

*Ulyss.* 'Tis known, Achilles, that you are in love  
With one of Priam's daughters.

*Achil.* Ha ! known !

*Ulyss.* Is that a wonder ?

The providence that's in a watchful state  
Knows almost every grain of Plutus' gold,  
Finds bottom in the uncomprehensive deeps,  
Keeps place with thought and almost, like the gods,  
Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles.

There is a mystery—with whom relation  
Durst never meddle—in the soul of state ;  
Which hath an operation more divine  
Than breath or pen can give expression to.  
All the commerce that you have had with Troy  
As perfectly is ours as yours, my lord. . . .  
Farewell, my lord : I as your lover speak :  
The fool slides o'er the ice that you should break.

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

The story of the fool and the ice came from Evesham, and was told first in print in 1600, by Robert Armin, afterwards one of Shakespeare's fellow-actors. The Evesham natural became so fond of the clown in a strolling company of players that he wanted to go off with them. He was prevented, but was allowed to watch them from the window of the Hart Inn until they were across the Avon on the road to Pershore. As soon as he was left alone, he dropped from the window, and, to the amazement of every one, made straight for the frozen river, crossing it swiftly on the thin ice and joining the players on the other side. This is a story of the Avon and of a company of players ; but that does not exhaust Shakespeare's personal interest in it. It is put into the mouth of Ulysses to point the moral of his own skating upon thin ice in his amour with a lady of the Court.

It may be thought that Shakespeare need not have been surprised at his love-affair being known, inasmuch as two of the sonnets, in which it is declared most plainly, were printed as his in 1599 in a poetical miscellany, having been given to the editor probably by some one who had a sinister motive. It does not follow, however, that the identity of the lady, and her high station, were known at that time. It is clear from the unprinted ballad of 1601, among the State Papers, which I have cited already, that the lines upon the fall of Mistress Fitton, the White Doe—

Pembroke strook her down  
And took her from the clown—

can only mean that she had been the mistress of a player before she became Lord Pembroke's mistress, and that the fact was known to the writer of the ballad, who was almost certainly old Churchyard, the poet. But the ballad was private, and Churchyard might have known more than most, inasmuch as he was about the Court, being known as "the old Court poet."

## SHAKESPEARE AS ACHILLES

Something more is heard of the secret love of Achilles for the daughter of Priam. Queen Hecuba and Polyxena herself jointly send him a letter to remind him of a pledge that he had given them not to fight with Hector. He reads the letter, and then says to Patroclus :

An oath that I have sworn. I will not break it.  
Fall Greeks, fail fame, honour or go or stay,  
My major vow lies here, this I'll obey.

Partly on account of this secret love-affair, and partly on account of his being inferior in titular rank to Agamemnon, Achilles keeps his tent. He spends his time lolling on his bed, listening to Patroclus as he mimics the several Greek chiefs, applauding with deep-chested laughter. Ulysses, in the world-renowned speech, "Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back," warns him that he must not rest upon his laurels won, but keep himself still in evidence by fresh achievements. Whoever Ulysses is meant for, Shakespeare assigns to him a very honourable and friendly disposition towards himself, permitting him to probe his own weaknesses to the bottom. Ulysses does not spare Achilles, who is represented as unsociable, and as eating his heart out in wounded pride. That Shakespeare fell into unsociable ways, after the slight put upon him or the set made against him when he was kept out of the poet-laureateship, is made probable by a supposed reference to him in *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1601). Fuller, indeed, wrote of certain wit-combats between him and Ben Jonson ; and these are supposed to have taken place at those convivial gatherings of the poets at the Mermaid tavern in Bread Street, Cheapside, which are the subject of the lines by Beaumont addressed to Ben Jonson. But Beaumont mentions no names besides Jonson's ; and as to Fuller's authority, it was one or two generations later, and he is otherwise very inadequate for Shakespeare's biography. The

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

*Jack Drum* play grew out of the quarrel among the poets, to which Jonson's *Poetaster* and Dekker's *Satiromastix* were contributions, and it is of the same date as those. One of the characters is an eminent poet, Planet, so called because the ladies were planet-struck by him. As he has been identified with Shakespeare (by Simpson and others), the following speech of his has an interest as confirming the parable of the unsociable Achilles : “I loved but three things in the world : Philosophie, thrift, and myselfe. Thou hast made me hate philosophie, a usurer’s greasy codpiece made me loathe thrift ; but if all the brewers’ jades in the town can drag me from love of myselfe, they shall do more than e’er the seven wise men of Greece could. Come, come now. I’ll be as sociable as Timon of Athens.” An exaggerated self-esteem is highly characteristic of Shakespeare’s Achilles. Whilst he is described as “unsociable,” and as slighted by his fellows (in one significant scene, in which they all “cut” him by previous arrangement among themselves), he has not “fallen out with fortune” ; it is not with him as with ebbing men :

But ’tis not so with me :  
Fortune and I are friends ; I do enjoy  
At ample point all that I did possess  
Save these men’s looks.

This is exactly the situation of Prospero (and the meaning of his name), notwithstanding his exile for twelve years in a desert island ; Fortune was “now my dear lady.” If it be not Shakespeare’s own case, we should have to find some reason why Achilles, the princely leader of the Myrmidons, should emphasise the fact that he was “not fallen out with fortune.”

There are many other things said of Achilles which have no meaning except as true of a modern counterpart. One of these, II. iii. 196, is a plain hint of the extent to which Shakespeare realised his dramatic situations by paraphrasing his own experiences :

## DANIEL AS AGAMEMNON

And never suffers matter of the world  
Enter his thoughts, save such as do revolve  
And ruminate himself.

The complement to it is the complaint of Ulysses, I. iii. 197, against Achilles and Patroclus (Fletcher), that they rated studious toil beneath effective action (in playwrights' work) :

*Ulyss.* They tax our policy, and call it cowardice,  
Count wisdom as no member of the war,  
Forestall prescience, and esteem no act  
But that of hand : the still and mental parts  
That do contrive how hands shall strike  
When fitness calls them on, and know by measure  
Of their observant toil the enemies' weight,—  
Why this hath not a finger's dignity :  
They call this bed-work, mappery, closet-war ;  
So that the ram that batters down the wall,  
For the great swing and rudeness of his poise,  
They place before his hand that made the engine,  
Or those that with the fineness of their souls  
By reason guide his execution.

*Nest.* Let this be granted, and Achilles' horse  
Makes many Thetis' sons.

## AGAMEMNON

The identification of Agamemnon with an actual person (Samuel Daniel) is suggested, as in the other instances, by certain non-Homeric touches, which must have had a motive and a precise meaning in the modern author's mind. Achilles has no personal quarrel with Agamemnon ; but the latter, presiding over the council of the Greek chiefs, is given a broad hint by Ulysses that the real reason for the apathy of the Greeks, and for the slack state of the war, is his own incompetence. The great speech on the need for observing degrees of merit in the State, includes a significant mention of "laurels" in the same line with "crowns" and "sceptres." Daniel was not the Poet Laureate with a full title ; but it is hardly doubtful that he was in the

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

place of the Laureate, and that he was used as a stop-gap to keep Shakespeare out. No one in the play treats Agamemnon otherwise than respectfully ; even Thersites says that he is “an honest fellow enough, and one that loves quails, but he has not so much brain as ear-wax.” Daniel loved his ease, and enjoyed it in a garden-house in “Old Street, nigh London,” where he would be obscure for months at a time, receiving the visits of his friends Camden, Donne, and other scholars. He himself ascribed his ease and comfort to the bounty of Elizabeth (*supra*, p. 41). He produced little after his *Musophilus* of 1599, and nothing of the same quality as the *Rosamond* and *Civil Wars* of his earlier period, although he survived Shakespeare two or three years. Thersites points also to his non-productiveness in a very enigmatic speech, of which the metaphors are all taken from the plague :

*Ther.* Agamemnon, how if he had boils ? full all over, generally ? And those boils did run, say so. Did not the general run then ? Were not that a botchy core ? *Then would come some matter from him ; I see none now.*

The running or rendering of a plague-boil or botch was always a hopeful sign.

The most delicate satire of Agamemnon is in the scene where Æneas arrives at his tent to deliver the challenge of Hector ; he is actually face to face with the King of Men and is addressing him, but he fails to recognise him, and needs an amusing number of broad hints from Agamemnon himself before he discovers who it is that he is talking to. Taking Æneas to be Fulke Greville, there is a special point in his non-recognition of Daniel as the crowned king of poetry. On the other hand, when Æneas first meets Achilles, he is at no loss :

<i>Æne.</i> What is your name ? <i>Achil.</i> <i>Æne.</i>	If not Achilles, sir, If not Achilles, nothing. Therefore Achilles.
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## CHAPMAN AS ULYSSES

In like manner Hector, when he arrives in the Grecian camp, has the following dialogue with Ajax :

*Ajax.* Great Agamemnon comes to meet us here.

*Hect.* The worthiest of them tell me name by name ;

But for Achilles, mine own searching eyes  
Shall find him by his large and portly size.

## ULYSSES

There are two or three subtle touches in the part of Ulysses from which it may be argued that Shakespeare intended that very fine part for George Chapman, upon whose translation of the *Iliad* much of his play was based. The chief hint is given in the scene where Ulysses (Chapman) meets Hector (Lord Essex) :

*Hect.* I know your favour, Lord Ulysses, well.

Ah, sir, there's many a Greek and Trojan dead,  
Since first I saw yourself and Diomed  
In Ilion, on your Greekish embassy.

*Ulyss.* Sir, I foretold you then what would ensue :  
*My prophecy is but half his journey yet ;*  
For yonder walls, etc.

It was not true that only half the time had elapsed from the beginning of the siege to the fall of Troy. In Homer the war is in its ninth year (ii. 295) and the end is near. In 'Troilus and Cressida,' for some reason, only seven years of the siege have passed, according to the speech of Agamemnon at the council (I. iii. 12), although the incidents that follow are those of the ninth and tenth years according to classical tradition. When Ulysses says to Hector that his "prophecy is but half his journey yet," this is Chapman dedicating to Lord Essex the first part of his translation of the *Iliad*. The volume dedicated to Lord Essex in 1598 contained only seven books down to the eleventh (omitting iii.-vi.), but both the dedication and the preface to the reader contained the promise of the rest of the first twelve "in the next edition." When the round dozen at length came out, the edition bore no

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

date ; but, as it is dedicated to Prince Henry, it must have been after the accession of King James. At all events, the translation dedicated to Essex covered nearly all the first half of the *Iliad*, with a promise that the omissions would be supplied. Certainly Chapman took a long time to complete the *Iliad*; it had not been completed in 1609, when 'Troilus and Cressida' was printed, and probably not until 1612. The whole of the *Odyssey* followed in two years thereafter. Hector, or Lord Essex, knows his favour well, and reminds him of the long time that had passed since he saw him first on his "Greekish embassy"—his epistle dedicatory of 1598 ; and Ulysses, that is to say, Chapman, answers that his "prophecy" is only half run even now, but that Troy was certainly destined to fall.

If this hypothetical reading of pleasant badinage over Chapman's long-delayed completion of his *Iliads* be thought a slight proof of his identity with Ulysses, the next proof will be thought slighter. Ulysses imparts to Nestor a deep design, to the end that Ajax, and not Achilles, shall fight with Hector :

*Ulyss.* Therefore 'tis meet Achilles meet not Hector ;  
Let us, *like merchants*, show our foulest wares,  
And think, perchance they'll sell.

But these artifices are not practised by merchants, certainly not by Shakespeare's merchants of the Rialto ; they are the artifices of *chapmen*. There is a pun in the first line ("meet"), and it is probable that the pun which would have been made upon Chapman's name by the correct word is really implied by using an incorrect one in its place. That he ought to have written "chapmen" may be inferred from the actual use of that word in its correct sense and in the same figure of speech in the conversation between Diomed and Paris on the subject of the latter's adulterous relations with Helen :

## CHAPMAN AS ULYSSES

*Par.* Fair Diomed, you do as chapmen do,  
Dispraise the thing that you desire to buy ;  
But we in silence hold this virtue well,  
We'll but commend what we intend to sell.

There is a third possible reference to Chapman, as Ulysses, in his character of translator, probably also as the author of the idea, in Byron's *Conspiracy*, that the measure of our merits is the opinion of others. Ulysses is conversing amicably with Achilles, as one philosophic mind with another :

*Ulyss.*                           A strange fellow here  
Writes me : "That man, how dearly ever parted,  
How much in having, or without or in,  
Cannot make boast to have that which he hath,  
Nor feels not what he owes, but by reflection ;  
As when his virtues shining upon others  
Heat them, and they retort that heat again  
To the first giver."

*Achil.*                         This is not strange, Ulysses, etc.

The "strange fellow's" style is made purposely involved and obscure ; it is a good-natured parody of Chapman's own prose style, the warmth and sincerity of which make up for its uncouthness. Chapman's two dedicatory letters to Lord Essex are full of such gnomic conceits, none of them less complex than the idea which is discussed with so pleasing an urbanity between Achilles and Ulysses. This fine passage is in Shakespeare's natural manner, not only the style but also the thought, excepting that the style of the sentence read from the book of the "strange fellow" is made uncouth like Chapman's, as if to remind him wittily that he is the honey-tongued Ulysses only when his friend writes his speeches for him.

The other Greek chiefs are Menelaus, Patroclus, Diomed, and Nestor. Of these I do not profess to be able to identify a Menelaus among the poets of the time. On him Thersites exhausts his scurrility ; and he is treated with coldness by every one. He may be merely the brief abstract of a cuckold, or he may be

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

meant for a real person, whose poetic distinction could hardly have been of the first or second rank. When speaking of the character of Parolles, I showed that Barnabe Barnes had been made the subject of a remarkably plain epigram by Campion in the preceding year (1602), in which his domestic economy is exhibited as controlled and kept going by Gabriel Harvey ; which may be the meaning of Thersites' dark enigma on cuckold Menelaus : "a thrifty shoeing-horn in a chain, hanging at his brother's leg."

## PATROCLUS

The graphic sketch of Patroclus amusing Achilles by mimicking the other Greek chiefs has no warrant, of course, in Homer, nor anywhere but in Shakespeare's private thought ; just as it is un-Homeric to show us Achilles lolling on his bed (in Homer he extemporisces verses to the music of the harp). Patroclus was evidently some one much in Shakespeare's company at that time. It is Thersites, as usual, who is allowed to characterise him in scurrilous language : "thou idle immaterial skein of sleeve-silk, thou green sarcenet flap for a sore eye, thou tassel of a prodigal's purse. . . . Heaven bless thee from a tutor, and discipline come not near thee ! Let thy blood be thy direction till thy death." There are various reasons for thinking that John Fletcher is the most likely of the poets to have been intimate with Shakespeare about the date of this play. The large volume of work which bears his name, in conjunction partly with Beaumont's, does not begin until 1605-6 ; yet he had been in London for some years before that, and he is most probably the Fletcher who is mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary*, about the years 1596-98, as having been "fetched" by an actor, Martin Slaughter, and having had money transmitted to him by the same Martin, whose name is connected mysteriously with a group of plays

## FLETCHER AND BEAUMONT

(*Hercules*, *Pythagoras*, *Focaise*, and *Alexander and Lodowick*). He was certainly joint-author with Shakespeare of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, probably also of ‘Henry VIII.’; but there is no external clue to the date of their collaboration: it is not at all likely to have been after 1605-6-7, when Fletcher began to produce voluminously on his own account and in conjunction with Beaumont; while the curious resemblance of the gaoler’s daughter in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to Ophelia points to a date about 1602-3. The most direct reason for identifying him with Patroclus is a speech (III. iii. 216) by the latter, of which both the argument and the allusions suggest the more usual motto of the Fletchers, *Martis non Cupidinis*—“of Mars, not of Cupid” (although it was not a very suitable motto for John Fletcher):

*Patr.* To this effect, Achilles, have I moved you.  
A woman impudent and mannish grown,  
Is not more loathed than an effeminate man  
In time of action. I stand condemn’d for this:  
They think my little stomach to the war,  
And your great love to me, restrains you thus:  
Sweet, rouse yourself; and the weak wanton Cupid  
Shall from your neck unloose his amorous fold,  
And, like a dew-drop from the lion’s mane,  
Be shook to air.

It was quite in Shakespeare’s manner to play upon heraldic mottoes and arms, as I have shown for the Pembroke heraldry in the Sonnets, and will show at once for the Beaumont motto and crest.

## DIOMED

The part of Diomed is taken exactly from Chaucer’s *Creseyd*. He is deputed by the Greek commander to go to Troy and bring back Cressida in exchange for the captured Antenor, whereupon he becomes the lover of Cressida and the supplanter of Troilus. It was open to Shakespeare to have left this traditional lover of

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

Cressida without an actual counterpart like the other Greek chiefs ; but he has not done so. Diomed is distinguished as one of the poets by two marks in the text, both of which are ingenious. The first is his gait, as described by Ulysses :

*Agam.* Is not yond Diomed, with Calchas' daughter ?

*Ulyss.* 'Tis he, I ken the manner of his gait ;  
He rises on the toe ; that spirit of his  
In aspiration lifts him from the earth.

There is probably no classical warrant for giving Diomed an elastic or springy step, although "rises on the toe" is highly characteristic of certain figures on antique marbles ; moreover, it is characteristic more or less of every one's walk. As a distinguishing mark of Diomed it is almost certainly taken from the Beaumont motto, *Erectus non elatus*, which is turned into a witty compliment to the most distinguished member of a distinguished family : "that spirit of his in aspiration lifts him from the earth." The same play upon heraldry is found in the address of Troilus to Diomed when he is to fight with him on the morrow for the revolted Cressida :

*Troil.* Farewell, revolted fair ! and, Diomed,  
Stand fast, and wear a castle on thy head.

"Stand fast" looks like another motto ; and the castle was one of the Beaumont crests : "An elephant surmounted with a tower triple, towered argent." Warburton has pointed out that "castle" was sometimes used for a closed helmet or casque ; in Urry's Chaucer Sir Thopas is represented with a castle by way of crest to his helmet. Steevens took the meaning of Troilus to be : "defend thy head with armour of more than common security." But the advice must have had some witty point, or it would not have been given by Troilus in that form.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is more than one piece of evidence in 'Troilus and Cressida' that Shakespeare had just been reading Beaumont's *Salmacis and Hermaphro-*

## CHURCHYARD AS NESTOR

### NESTOR

There was a real old Nestor among the Elizabethan poets—Thomas Churchyard. He had been often in the wars, and had written much curious verse as well, ever since the time of Henry VIII., having been originally in the service of the Earl of Surrey, and associated with him in a volume of Songs and Sonnets which was long popular. He was a spirited old gentleman of breeding and education, with a caustic wit and a keen sense of probity.<sup>1</sup> Spenser mentions him both in *Colin Clout* and in *The Faerie Queene*; he is named among the poets by Meres (1598), and by several others in such terms as to show that he held a prominent place in the literary world of his day. At the date of ‘*Troilus and Cressida*’ (1603) he was about eighty-three years old, and still writing, one of his latest pieces being a welcome to James I. Not only is he the most obvious modern counterpart of Nestor, but there is actually a play upon the name of Churchyard, where Thersites speaks of “Old Nestor, whose wit was mouldy ere your grandsires had nails on their toes.”<sup>2</sup> The mouldiness, be it noted, is said of his “wit,” which is one of those not unfrequent slips in this play, betraying

*ditus*, published anonymously in 1602; so that, despite his youth, he would have been reckoned among the poets at the date of the play. The resemblance between the two following passages is very close:

*Pas.* But to prove to you that Helen loves him [*Troilus*]; she came and puts me her white hand to his cloven chin—

*Cres.* Juno have mercy! how came it cloven?

*Pas.* Why, you know 'tis dimpled: I think his smiling becomes him better than any man in all Phrygia.

Beaumont's identical notion, the year before, is:

Then did she lift her hand unto his chin,  
And praised the pretty dimpling of his skin;  
But straight his chin she 'gan to overslip,  
When she beheld the redness of his lip.

<sup>1</sup> See the original biography by H. W. Adnitt, of Shrewsbury, in *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. and Nat. Hist. Society*, Oswestry (1880).

<sup>2</sup> There is a similar joke upon Churchyard's name in *The Return from Parnassus*.

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

Shakespeare's private thought of poets all the while that he is writing of warriors. Nestor's meeting with Hector is also worded appropriately to Churchyard :

I knew thy grandsire,  
And once fought with him ; he was a soldier good.

Lord Essex's grandsire was Sir Francis Knollys, upon whom Churchyard wrote a eulogy on his death in 1576 ; he fought *with* him, but not necessarily against him, the ambiguity being required by the fact that Nestor and Hector were in opposite camps. If it be said that Shakespeare had no need to have any one in his mind in delineating so proverbial a personage as old Nestor, yet how intelligible become the following lines if we assume a twinkle of humour and a genuine impulse of affection at the thought of old Churchyard in the author's mind as he penned them :

Let me embrace thee, thou good old chronicle,  
That hast so long walk'd hand in hand with Time.

The poor old gentleman died in 1604, a fortnight after a sad accident that befell him in the presence at Court, from which he was "faynt to be carried out."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gaudy Letters, *Hist. MSS. Commiss. Report*, vii. (1) 528. It is not improbable that we may have, in one of the best-known passages of 'Hamlet,' traces of the original and racy imagination of Churchyard. It is the speech in two parts from Æneas' Tale to Dido, professedly taken from a play but once acted because "it pleased not the million." Hamlet "chiefly loved" this speech, which the strolling player was asked to give as "a taste of his quality." Then follow the slaughter of Priam by Pyrrhus, and the distraction of Hecuba, in Shakespeare's own grandest rhythm and swing, so filled with tragic pathos that the actor himself is moved to tears. It is clear that there is no source for this in the *Queen Dido* of Marlowe and Nash (1594), nor in the original, the second book of the *Æneid*, so far as concerns the suggestion of details. But Churchyard mentions in one of his prefaces (1602) that he had an unpublished work which he calls by the very name in 'Hamlet,' "Æneas' Tale to Dydo, largely [i.e. freely] and truly translated out of Virgil, which I once showed to the Queen's Majesty, and had it again." But he had lost it, having lent it, with other writings, to "some such noble friends as I am loathe to offend"—by asking them back. Churchyard was just the man to have conceived the idea of the fine paraphrase of Virgil, which Hamlet professed to have taken direct from a play, although doubtless his versification would have been uncouth and the scene only half realised. The three archaic words which are peculiar to it, "mobled queen,"

## LORD ESSEX AS HECTOR

### HECTOR

Turning next to the Trojans, who are the statesmen, soldiers, or men of affairs, the great figure is Hector. He corresponds at many points with the gallant and ill-fated Earl of Essex. It is undoubted that Shakespeare had this noble in his mind in drawing more than one of his characters. The Germans are fond of seeing him in Hamlet—his irresolution, balancing of motives, scruples of conscience ; which is not at all unlikely, although Hamlet is Shakespeare himself, and his irresolution not constitutional, but an artifice of his affected madness. In the case of Henry V. at Agincourt in 1414 it is not merely probable, but demonstrable, that he was thinking of Essex in his French campaign of 1591—the incident of the king trailing a pike, and moving about among his men like one of them, being true of Essex, but not ascribed to Henry V. in Holinshed. Also in the case of ‘Coriolanus’ it is nearly certain that Shakespeare got his hint and idea for that play from Dr. Barlow’s sermon at Paul’s Cross after the rebellion and confessions of Essex, in which the latter is compared with Coriolanus, “a gallant young, but discontented, Roman, who might make a fit parallel for the late Earl, if you read his life ” in North’s Plutarch, and according

“*bisson rheum,*” and “made *milch* the burning eyes of heaven,” are just such as the old poet from Shrewsbury would have used. His noble friend who had this manuscript of him I should guess was Southampton, in whose library Shakespeare would have seen it. The dramatised version may have been actually that *Dido and Æneas* which I have given reasons for associating with a private performance at Southampton House in 1598 (*supra*, p. 206). If that were so, it is interesting to recall what Shakespeare wrote of it some six years after (1st and 2nd quartos, 1603, 1604) :

*Ham.* I heard thee speak a speech once, but it was never acted ; or, if it was, not above once ; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million ; 'twas caviare to the general ; but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallies in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation ; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved : 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido, etc.

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

to the “parallel” method of Plutarch. Lastly, it has been shown in a former chapter how closely Essex corresponds with Sebastian in ‘The Tempest.’ Some of these points of agreement are the same as those with Hector in this play. Essex’s noble infirmity of *impatience*, from the generosity of his nature, is brought out in Hector with unusual care. On the last fatal morning, when he is eager for the fray, Shakespeare is at pains to make no fewer than three persons in Troy try to restrain him by successive warnings and entreaties —first Andromache, then Cassandra, then Priam. (In Homer it is Priam and Hecuba who try to dissuade him in a few words.) He resists them all; it is Essex’s “last fatal impatience, for so I will call it” (Bacon). The challenge of Hector, which Æneas carried to the camp of the Greeks, with its curious anachronism from the age of chivalry, is exactly Essex’s challenge to Villars, Governor of Rouen, in the campaign of 1591; single combat was to decide which of them was the better man, fought for the better cause, or served the fairer mistress. Although the last clause sounds strange for 1591, yet it is historical; and it was probably because it was quixotically characteristic of Essex that Shakespeare recalled it in depicting him as Hector in the following challenge which Æneas delivered on his behalf :

If there be one among the fair’st of Greece  
That holds his honour higher than his ease,  
That seeks his praise more than he fears his peril,  
That knows his valour and knows not his fear,  
That loves his mistress more than in confession  
With truant vows to her own lips he loves,  
And dare avow her beauty and her worth  
In other arms than hers—to him this challenge.  
Hector, in view of Trojans and of Greeks,  
Shall make it good, or do his best to do it :  
He hath a lady wiser, fairer, truer, etc.

The characterisation of Hector is particular and con-

## FULKE GREVILLE AS ÆNEAS

sistent throughout. Æneas, who knew him well, sums him up in words which suit Essex perfectly :

In the extremity of great and little,  
Valour and pride excel themselves in Hector :  
The one almost as infinite as all,  
The other blank as nothing. Weigh him well,  
And that which looks like pride is courtesy.

But the most significant thing is the manner of Hector's death. In this the play departs not only from Homer radically, but also from the post-Homeric tradition, as in Lydgate. From Lydgate Shakespeare took the idea of making Hector exhaust himself in pursuit of "one in sumptuous armour," so that he has to rest after the capture, with his helmet off and his shield hung on his back. But he follows Lydgate no farther : Hector is not killed by Achilles, but is surrounded unarmed and done to death in cold blood by the spears of the Myrmidons. That is really the manner of Troilus' death in Lydgate ; but in the play Troilus escapes alive, and his fate is transferred to Hector. It is most appropriate to Essex's end—a death in the Tower at the hands of the executioner after a formal process before his peers. That Achilles should have commanded the Myrmidons to enclose Hector and dispatch him is merely a necessity of the action arising out of the conventional relations of parties ; but the tradition has been varied or adapted with the utmost ingenuity.

### ÆNEAS

The other figures among the Trojan heroes who are assigned prominent parts are Æneas and, of course, Troilus. The part of Æneas is a distinguished one. He goes between the besieged city and the camp of the Greeks, honoured on both sides ; he is also the useful man inside Troy, on the occasion of Diomed coming to fetch Cressida, and in the affairs of Troilus. He is reported taken by Ajax, and Troilus vows that he must

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

be rescued from him. I have no doubt that he is meant for Fulke Greville, and that the part of Æneas in the action of the play is determined not by classical authority, but solely because the author knew of one who was fitted to fill such a part. The proofs are not of so particular a kind as in some other instances ; but I may point out that the last words given to Æneas, “ You do dis-comfort,” etc., show the same cheerful spirit as Gonzalo (Fulke Greville) is made to express at more than one place in ‘ The Tempest.’

## TROILOUS

In the case of Troilus we have one of those audacious marks of identity which Shakespeare is wont to introduce. Pandarus, in pointing him out to Cressida among the chiefs returning from the field, exclaims : “ O admirable youth ! he ne’er saw three and twenty.” Lord Pembroke was not out twenty-three until the 9th of April 1603 ; the age of Troilus must have been fixed some time shortly before the 7th of February 1603, when the play was entered on the Stationers’ Register. Troilus, in all but his love passages, and perhaps substantially in these also, is a correct portrait of Lord Pembroke, “ the world’s fresh ornament ” of the Sonnets. The chief passage is the description of him by Ulysses (IV. v. 96) :

The youngest son of Priam, a true knight,  
Not yet mature, yet matchless, firm of word,  
*Speaking in deeds, and deedless in his tongue;*  
Not soon provoked, nor being provoked soon calm’d ;  
His heart and hand both open and both free ;  
For what he has he gives, what thinks he shows ;  
Yet gives he not till judgement guide his bounty,  
Nor dignifies an impure thought with breath ;  
Manly as Hector, but more dangerous ;  
For Hector in his blaze of wrath subscribes  
To tender objects, but he in heat of action  
Is more vindictive than jealous love :  
They call him Troilus, and on him erect

## LORD PEMBROKE AS TROILUS

A second hope, as fairly built as Hector.  
Thus says Æneas ; one that knows the youth  
Even to his inches, and with private soul  
Did in great Ilion thus translate him to me.

Æneas, who knows Troilus even to his inches, is Fulke Greville, the loyal friend of Sir Philip Sidney, who seemed to live again in his nephew Pembroke both in countenance and in character. “Not soon provoked,” open and free of speech, are exactly the qualities of the young noble in the ‘Lover’s Complaint’ :

His qualities were beauteous as his form,  
For maiden-tongued he was, and thereof free ;  
Yet, if men moved him, was he such a storm  
As oft ’twixt May and April is to see,  
When winds breathe sweet, unruly though they be.

But the third line, in italics, is the most characteristic thing. The thought is expanded by Troilus himself in the reply to his priest-brother Helenus at the Trojan council (II. ii. 46) :

Nay, if we talk of reason,  
Let's shut our gates and sleep : manhood and honour  
Should have hare-hearts, would they but fat their thoughts  
With this cramm'd reason : reason and respect  
Make livers pale and lustihood deject.

This is the ruling maxim of Philocosmus in Daniel’s dialogue *Musophilus*, the young noble who is Daniel’s interlocutor being clearly pointed out, in the last stanzas, as his former pupil, Lord Herbert. One of the many fine stanzas which Daniel gives to him must suffice to identify Pembroke with Troilus in his reply to Helenus :

Men find that action is another thing  
Than what they in discoursing papers read :  
The world’s affairs require in managing  
More arts than those wherein you clerks proceed :  
Whilst tim’rous Knowledge stands considering  
Audacious Ignorance hath done the deed,—

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

“timorous knowledge” becoming the “hare-hearts” crammed with reason.

I have already pointed out that it was probably from the poem in which these lines occur that Shakespeare got his general idea of Greeks and Trojans as respectively the men of thought and the men of action.

### CRESSIDA

In the part of Cressida, Shakespeare has departed from tradition to suit his own purpose, just as he has done in most of the characters and in some of the action of his play. The episode of Troilus, Cressida, Diomed, and Pandarus is taken from Chaucer in its main outlines. But Chaucer's Cressida is not at all a wanton ; she is pensive and full of conscience, becoming faithless through a hard fate rather than by the original lightness of her love. Shakespeare drew his Cressida from the life, and there can be little doubt that she is made to show the least favourable side of Mistress Fitton. He betrays his private thought, with a carelessness that is really unpardonable, in the following dialogue between Cressida and her uncle Pandarus, before Troilus was introduced to her :

*Cres.* There is among the Greeks Achilles, a better man than Troilus.

*Pan.* Achilles ! a drayman, a porter, a very camel.

*Cres.* Well, well.

*Pan.* “Well, well.” Why, have you any discretion ? have you any eyes ? do you know what a man is ? Is not birth, beauty, good shape, discourse, manhood, learning, gentleness, virtue, youth, liberality, and such like, the spice and salt that season a man ?

But how could any one deny those qualities to the god-like Achilles, the son of Peleus by the goddess Thetis, the paragon of the heroic world ? There is not even an attempt to disguise the identity of Shakespeare himself in making Achilles “a drayman, a porter, a very camel.” Cressida's preference for him over

## CRESSIDA, HELEN, PANDARUS

Troilus was probably real enough ; and there is a touch of pride in thus bringing it to light.

### HELEN

Lastly, the picture of Helen is so lifelike, and the argument of Hector (Essex), at the council of the Trojan princes, for sending her back to her lawful husband so modern, that we are led to look for an actual Elizabethan counterpart. The beautiful Lady Rich, Lord Essex's sister, was exactly in that relation to Lord Mountjoy, being received in the great world as the mistress of his lordship's house for several years before she was divorced from Lord Rich. It is not to be supposed that that well-known case is reproduced in its real relations, or that Paris is Lord Mountjoy and Menelaus Lord Rich. The author's imagination would never be bound in such fetters of consistency. But, if there were no other proof that he was thinking of the men and women of his own time, the scene between Helen, Paris, and Pandarus, and the narrated wit-combat between Helen and Troilus, would remind us irresistibly that we were in the Court of Elizabeth. Queen Hecuba laughed till her eyes ran o'er, and even Cassandra laughed. Shakespeare had some unusually good means of knowing the witty sayings and doings of the great world of his time ; his informants must have been witty to retail them to him, and he was, of course, quick to apprehend. He was admitted within the walls of Ilium from time to time upon his proper business of player, and saw enough to realise in outline ; but his more particular knowledge would have been brought to him by Cressida herself, until such time as she was sent back to her father in order to ransom Antenor.

The play ends with an epilogue spoken by Pandarus, which has done more than anything else to fix the character of satire upon the whole piece. The action

## ACHILLES IN HIS TENT

really ends with the words of Troilus on the murder of Hector :

Strike a free march to Troy ! with comfort go ;  
Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe.

It looks as if the reappearance of Pandarus at the close, and his speech as epilogue, had been an after-thought of a later year, the unpleasant subject of his speech being akin to ideas in ‘King Lear’ and ‘Timon of Athens,’ with the Aristophanic touch of bitterness proper to the years about 1605-6. The identity of Pandarus is obscure, and is perhaps complex in itself. He is called the Prince of Lycia on the title-page, and is a courtier in manners ; but in his last speech he goes farther than he had done as Cressida’s “uncle” to justify the derivation of “pandar” from his name—a broker-lackey. It is probable that he is compounded of more than one original—his manners and rank taken from some one actually among the Trojans of the day, and his practices those of some inferior person, not unlike Parolles, or the Lodowick of ‘Edward III.’

## CHAPTER XIII

### MARIANA IN THE MOATED GRANGE

IF one were to select the plays of Shakespeare in which moralists have been most at a loss to understand the justice measured out to one or more of the characters, the following would be the list : ‘Measure for Measure,’ ‘Twelfth Night,’ ‘Hamlet,’ ‘All’s Well that Ends Well,’ and ‘Troilus and Cressida.’ ‘The Tempest’ ought to be added as the most perplexing of all, in respect both of the unintelligible wrongs which Prospero had endured at the hands of his “enemies,” and of the strange indignities which he put upon two of them, the drunken butler and the jester. There might be added also ‘The Two Gentlemen of Verona,’ in respect of the supine conduct of Valentine in forgiving his treacherous friend Proteus. In ‘Troilus and Cressida,’ we are perplexed by the tone of the whole, as well as shocked that Hector should be taken with his armour off and done to death in cold blood by the spears of Achilles’ Myrmidons. In ‘All’s Well that Ends Well,’ Dr. Johnson, pre-eminent as a moralist, is aggrieved that the mean and heartless conduct of Bertram, as he thought it, should be rewarded with married happiness. In ‘Measure for Measure,’ the same critic opines that “every reader feels some indignation when he finds Angelo spared”; while Coleridge is pained by that issue as by no other plot of Shakespeare’s: the pardon of Angelo “baffles the strong indignant claims of justice.” In ‘Hamlet’ everything is perverse: Polonius, a

## MARIANA

"good old man," is murdered ; but Claudius is let off time after time until the end, when he is dispatched with a batch of others on the stage ; while Ophelia's calamity appears to be absolutely gratuitous. In 'Twelfth Night,' for all the humour and gusto of the action, "the maltreatment of Malvolio does not really appeal," says a dramatic critic, "to civilised sensitive human beings : even the glamour of Shakespeare's name is insufficient to render this aspect of the play agreeable." The practical joke upon the countess' steward is the more remarkable that it is wholly Shakespeare's invention, without conventional warrant from any old story.

The explanation is the same in them all—the author's own private affairs. Valentine's pardon of Proteus in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' is Shakespeare's condonation of the theft of his mistress by Lord Herbert (in the Sonnets). Hamlet's revenge is not really the blood-vengeance of a son for the murder of his father, which it purports to be ostensibly, but Shakespeare's own revenge upon a certain White Staff of Queen Elizabeth's Court, whose identity is thinly disguised under Polonius. It is the same real person who is victimised by a practical joke as the steward of the lady Olivia's household. It is still the same person, with the same Puritanical leanings, who is caught in his own toils as the lord Angelo, at once the seducer and contract-breaker and the stern executor of the law upon others. Those are the plays in which Shakespeare deals with his own entanglement in the affairs of Mistress Fitton. In the others he deals with his own affairs in a more public respect—with the set made against him by certain nobles and poets to keep him out of the Laurel Crown or the leadership. He manages all this intricate and delicate business with his accustomed skill, and with greater success in avoiding the charge of putting real persons on the stage than some of his contemporaries. In all this he is

## 'MEASURE FOR MEASURE'

"like himself," as Francis Bacon knew that he ought to have been, but did not succeed in being. He is by nature vindictive, a good hater, "a wiper of scores out with all men." But he is also merciful, as one should be who needs mercy. I believe it will be found that the anomalies of poetic or dramatic justice which the critics have noted in a few of the plays can all be accounted for by the intrusion of his personal feeling in personal circumstances. More particularly in 'Measure for Measure,' the pardon of Angelo by the duke has a purely personal meaning.

The date of 'Measure for Measure' is known fairly well. The entry of it in the Revels Accounts, as having been given before King James at Whitehall on 26th December 1604, is probably correct in substance (although the existing record may not be that authentic one which Malone must have seen). The play has obvious affinities in thought with 'Hamlet,' and some with 'Twelfth Night.' It is one of the group belonging to the years 1601-4, the order of which may have been 'Twelfth Night,' 'Hamlet,' 'Troilus and Cressida,' and 'Measure for Measure.' It is probable that the three former were written before the accession of James in April 1603, the latter after it. The duke, in 'Measure for Measure,' I. i. 68, is made to excuse his privy departure from his capital in words which are in effect an ingenious reference to King James's "inhibition against the inordinate and daily access of people," cited in a *True Narrative of the Entertainment of the King from Edinburgh to London* (1603). His motive may have been the same as Henry VIII.'s in 1513, who, on going publicly to St. Paul's, avoided the press of people through fear of the infection of plague then raging severely. The great plague of 1603 interfered with business of every kind in London, closed the theatres, and sent the players travelling. Supposing this play to have been written in that year, it could hardly have been produced at a public theatre until 1604 (during

## MARIANA

which there was a lull in the plague), and might then have been reserved for a first performance before the Court at Christmas.

‘Measure for Measure’ is one of the plays that grew out of the chief situation of the Sonnets, the poet’s entanglement in the affairs of Mistress Fitton. The shortest way to the personal interest of it is through Mariana living in dejection in the moated grange. Mariana is Mary Fitton, who did actually retire in melancholy to a moated grange after her disgrace and her release from durance in May 1601. Her moated grange is still in existence nearly the same as when she occupied it. It is about nine miles from Coventry, and four from Nuneaton—some five-and-twenty from Stratford-on-Avon—standing on the border of the park of Arbury Hall, the residence of her sister Anne, wife of John Newdigate, the squire of Arbury. Its present name is Temple House, a name which has descended from its ancient association with the Knights Templars. The square tower at the eastern end is probably as old as the Templars themselves. The site of another preceptory of the order, Temple Bruer, or Temple Grange, in Lincolnshire, is still marked by a similar “massive tower”; while the preceptory of Temple Chelsing, parish of Sacomb, Herts, is now represented only by the moat. The Temple Grange of Arbury still keeps the moat, the tower, and the dwelling-house, the two former of Templar age, the latter in the Tudor style. After the suppression of the Knights Templars in the beginning of the fourteenth century, their preceptory would appear to have become the grange of the adjoining Augustinian priory of Arbury. It retains a trace of having been the grange or granary of the monastery in the immense tithe-barn, of which one of the original walls remains, of red sandstone three feet thick—the same stone that is seen in the Tudor grange-house. The rectangular cross of the Knights Templars, which

## THE MOATED GRANGE

is cut in the stone over one of the windows, may have been added during a restoration some fifty years ago ; but it marks correctly the history of the house, and the origin of its name, which was probably Temple Grange before it became Temple House.

Shakespeare calls Mariana's residence the moated grange at St. Luke's :

*Duke.* I will presently to Saint Luke's : there, at the moated grange, resides this dejected Mariana.

St. Luke's is a somewhat thin disguise of Temple. That evangelist is associated in a quite peculiar way with the Temple through his two first chapters. It does not appear that St. Luke was the patron saint of the Knights Templars in the same way that St. John Baptist was of the Knights Hospitallers ; but Scott, who had many odd sources of knowledge, must have had some reason for making the Templar in *Ivanhoe* swear, "Now, by St. Luke" (while he gives him one or more other oaths on other occasions). But, so far as concerns Shakespeare's own habitual association of ideas, it can be shown that he would have translated Temple by St. Luke's. This proof comes from 'The Taming of the Shrew,' the only other play in which the name St. Luke's is found. It is there given twice to the Christian church in modern Padua at which the marriage of Bianca was to be celebrated. Why did he call the church St. Luke's, why give it a name at all ? The old play, which he adapted, lays its scene in ancient Athens, and correctly gives the said marriage to a pagan celebrant, the priest of the temple of Hymen ; but, for the rest, the author, or authors, forget that they are in pagan antiquity, and speak of "the church" in nearly a dozen places. The incongruity in the ecclesiastical language is so noticeable that Shakespeare humorously resolves that there shall be consistency on his part. Therefore, in adapting the scenes to modern times, he transfers the hymeneal rite to a church with the name

## MARIANA

of the Christian saint and evangelist most naturally suggested by Temple. In the plan of Padua given in Braun's *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, the work which he used for local colour in 'Hamlet' (Elsinore), and in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' (Milan), he would have found a church dedicated to St. Luke; but it is not easy to find in the plan, being one of the smaller churches, and would not have been chosen unless the name had been suggested to him in the association of his ideas with the Temple. The same association would have recurred when he was thinking of a name for Temple Grange.

Much has been written on the identity of Mariana's moated grange, but that has been by way of comment upon Tennyson, not upon Shakespeare. Tennyson had studied 'Measure for Measure' closely (before he was twenty) and composed the two exquisite poems of "Mariana" and "Isabel" under the inspiration of it. It is easy to see whence he got his ideas for Mariana's Castle of Dejection. Malone pointed out, in a note to this passage, a fact which Tennyson must have known quite well, namely, that any solitary house in the Lincolnshire Fens is called a grange.<sup>1</sup> It was in some such house that Tennyson placed the dejected Mariana. The scenery is of the Fens—no trees, a sluice not far from the house, etc. Although the vegetation around the house comes into the picture with striking effect, there is only a formal reference to a moat in one of the lines—

In the lonely moated grange—

as if to justify the motto of the poem from 'Measure for Measure.' The dykes proper to the fen, to which pertained the sluice, must do duty for the moat, and any lonely house for the grange.

'Measure for Measure' is based upon George

<sup>1</sup> "In Lincolnshire they at this day call every lone house that is unconnected with others a *grange*."

## WHESTONE'S OLD PLAY

Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, a play in two parts published in 1578. Whetstone was one of the most vigorous and original of the earlier Elizabethan playwrights, with that property in his writing of stimulating the imagination, which Shakespeare profited so much by in reading the work of less thoughtful and simpler minds. The old play contains some powerful and effective scenes, the merit of which was recognised by Thomas Campbell in his well-known Introduction to an edition of Shakespeare. It is needless to look beyond it for the groundwork of the later play, or to follow the learned and exhaustive Douce into the many parallel forms of the same story. Several hints that Shakespeare used for his own purpose lie on the surface of Whetstone's drama ; for example, the latter quotes the maxim, *Cucullus non facit monachum*, "the cowl does not make the monk," which was the hint for the duke's disguise as a monk, and for the whole business of monastery and nunnery introduced as novelties into 'Measure for Measure.' The most important thing that he copied exactly from Whetstone, besides the business of prisoners, gaoler, and executioner, is the character of Angelo, which is the same as that of Promos—an austere man of hitherto unblemished virtue, who makes a sudden slip, and thereafter behaves meanly to cover his lapse. It was this character that attracted Shakespeare to Whetstone's forgotten play ; he had no occasion to change it, but he changed much else.

The scene of the original play is laid at the town of Julio, in Hungary, of which the governor is Promos. He enforces an old law against seduction, and himself breaks it. In Part II. of the old play the king, Corvinus, comes to the town to investigate the conduct of Promos. Shakespeare alters this, so that the scene is the capital, Vienna, and Angelo (for Promos) the deputy of the duke, who has taken leave of absence for a time, but remains near the scene in the disguise of a monk. The action then proceeds *mutatis mutandis*. But the

## MARIANA

part of Cassandra, who is the governor's victim in the old comedy, is divided between two—Isabella and Mariana—who play into each other's hands. The new heroine, Mariana, had been contracted to Angelo five years before, but the contract was disavowed by him on the minor ground that her dowry had been lost, but chiefly for the reason that he had made discoveries against her honour, or that her “reputation was disvalued in levity.” By the good offices of the disguised duke, Mariana takes the place of Isabella at the midnight assignation with Angelo; Isabella's virtue is saved, and Mariana is enabled to force Angelo into the fulfilment of his old contract. Angelo is condemned under his own law (as in the original); but Mariana begs his life (backed by Isabella), and the play ends, as Whetstone's does, with the promise of their married felicity. There are, it will be observed, considerable variations from the original story; and in discovering the reason for them, we discover a private motive.

Shakespeare found Isabella and Mariana, and the personation of the one by the other, in a ballad of the time; only it is Isabel who personates Maria in the ballad. This ballad, called “The Happy Adventure; or The Witty Lady,” and to be sung to the tune “Wert thou much fairer than thou art,” is printed among others in Jordan's *Royal Arbour of Loyal Poesie* (1664). Strangely enough, its existence there was overlooked by Malone, who saw that three of its companion ballads were “founded on the fables of ‘Much Ado About Nothing,’ ‘The Winter's Tale,’ and ‘The Merchant of Venice.’” Collier also overlooked the ‘Measure for Measure’ ballad, while he claimed the discovery of the other three, saying nothing about Malone's acquaintance with them fifty years before. Malone was careful to say that the ballads were “founded on the *fables*” of the three comedies; and he pointed out that ‘The Merchant of Venice’ ballad—“The Forfeiture”—made the Jew's own daughter, corresponding to Jessica

## A BALLAD SOURCE

in the play, to act the part of the merchant's advocate before the court. Collier's hypothesis was, that the ballads were actually taken out of Shakespeare's plots —postulating an imagination which might just as well have been original, so many are the variations and the picturesque touches not to be found in the plays. Not so much for the sake of the ballad itself, or for the refutation of the Collier theory, but as necessary to the proof of Shakespeare's original source for Isabel and Mariana to replace Cassandra, I give here most of the stanzas of it :—

### THE HAPPY ADVENTURE ; OR THE WITTY LADY A STORY

*Tune—“Wert thou much fairer than thou art.”*

All you that wit and beauty know,  
Give ear to me and I will show  
A witty fair one that can fit  
Your minds with beauty and with wit.  
She was a Virgin not inthrall'd,  
And commonly Maria call'd.

Fair Isabel was one that she  
Had lov'd even from her infancy,  
Which was betrothed to a quick  
And nimble youth call'd Frederick ;  
Who for a chance which often doth  
Befall, refus'd to keep his oath.

Her brother was a merchant, and  
Had all her portion in his hand,  
A man of judgment, wealth, and wit,  
And went himself to sea with it :  
But certain news came on a day,  
He and his ship was cast away.

Her portion by mischance thus gone,  
She must no more be lookt upon ;  
For Frederick will make 't appear  
He loved her money more than her :  
Thus in one day she must forego  
A brother and a husband too.



## A BALLAD SOURCE

For 'twas well known that he and she  
Were lovers ere he went to sea :  
His coming home hath rais'd them all  
Who did in desperation fall.

They meet, kiss, and salute their loves,  
One's soul in t'other's body moves :  
The joyes they have no tongue can tell  
But only they that love as well :  
The marriage day appointed is,  
The first step to a lover's bliss.

You witty fair ones that are here,  
Is not this project chaste and clear ?  
And was it not a noble end  
To pleasure a contracted friend ?  
Of all that poets e'er exprest  
The witty fair one is the best.

Jordan, who printed this ballad in 1664 along with four others, in the midst of a quantity of cavalier songs and other verse which might have been his own, did not say where he got it. But, as he gives the name of the tune at the head of it, it is probable that he had an old printed broadside before him. Such ballads were sung at street-corners or at gatherings of people indoors. Many are extant, some with dates and with the printers' or publishers' names ; and there can be no doubt that they were common in Shakespeare's lifetime. They were often on the same subject as a play ; for example, 'Troilus and Cressida' and 'Titus Andronicus.' Elderton, who was one of Robert Greene's boon companions, is known to have been the author of several ; and it is probable that Greene himself, a spendthrift man of genius, resorted to that kind of composition among the many other exercises of his prolific pen. Collier's hypothesis, that ballads were extracted in later times from plays, will apply well enough to certain specimens which he possessed, written in a feigned handwriting, with a peculiar pigment, on the blank pages of a MS. copy of the *Eikon Basilike*.

The simplest proof that Shakespeare must have

## MARIANA

He doth begin to love each grace  
That dwells in fair Maria's face ;  
Her wit and beauty (both combined)  
So strangely captivate his minde,  
That he sollicites night and day  
The lady in a lustful way.

His last request she answers thus :  
Sir, what will people speak of us  
If't should be known, as 'twill (quoth she),  
If I at last with child should be ?  
He answers straight (to quiet all fear),  
Ere that be known he'll marry her.

She bids him come at night, and she  
Will entertain him secretly :  
Quoth she, if just at ten you'l wait  
You shall come through the garden gate :  
One pair of stairs you cannot miss.  
Next to the bower my chamber is.

There we in darkness both must lye,  
You'l finde no other light but I.  
And in the morning, when the day  
Appears, you must make haste away ;  
Lest visitants do come to me  
And make a sad discovery.

. . . . .  
The morning comes, the sun doth rise ;  
And now he views his mistress' eyes ;  
But when he had survey'd her well,  
'Twas his contracted Isabel.

This was the witty fair one's plot.  
He swore and curst and up he got.  
Maria doth the musick guide  
To bid good Morrow to the bride ;  
And every part o' the town doth tell  
That he hath married Isabel.

He findes himself thus catcht, and he  
In silence suffers it to be.  
Maria with good news doth come :  
Her brother is come richly home ;  
And that the rumour of the wrack  
(As it appears) was a mistake.

This proves great joy to Isabel ;  
Maria likes the news as well :

## A BALLAD SOURCE

For 'twas well known that he and she  
Were lovers ere he went to sea :  
His coming home hath rais'd them all  
Who did in desperation fall.

They meet, kiss, and salute their loves,  
One's soul in t'other's body moves :  
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The simplest proof that Shakespeare must have

## MARIANA

had this ballad before him, for the parts of Isabella and Mariana, is that he took those names and that of Frederick from it ; that he transposed the parts of Maria and Isabel because he wanted the name of Maria (Mariana) for the contracted lady ; that he gave the name of Frederick, the “nimble youth” who jilted the lady after the loss of her dower, to the brother who had her dower at sea with him and lost it, having another name, Angelo, for the contract-breaker. But he makes the brother to be “Frederick, the great soldier who miscarried at sea,” a “noble and renowned” person, forgetting to explain why a great soldier should have had his sister’s dowry at sea with him. In the ballad it is all intelligible and consistent ; her brother was a merchant, who was trading with his sister’s money ; the money being supposed lost by the wreck of the venture, her lover jilted her on purely mercenary grounds. Shakespeare keeps the loss of the dower, but he is careful to state that the contract had been broken “chiefly” because Angelo “pretended discoveries of dishonour” in Mariana, or that “her reputation was disvalued in levity.” This contract had been made five years before the action begins, and broken off some time in the interval. Mariana had fallen into dejection, and was now residing in the moated grange at St. Luke’s.

Is it conceivable that a ballad-maker could have extracted “The Witty Lady” from the dramatic parts of Isabella and Mariana? Is it not certain that Shakespeare had the ballad before him, and that he picked out from it just what suited his purpose? If so, the changes which he made are significant. His Mariana was Mary Fitton, a lady of the Court ; therefore her brother is noble and a great soldier. She fell into disgrace ; therefore her reputation was disvalued in levity. She was virtually contracted to Sir William Knollys, the Comptroller of the Household, about 1597-98, who behaved coldly to her at the time of her mishap

## TEMPLE GRANGE

in 1601 ; therefore she was contracted to Angelo five years before the scene opens, and therefore his desertion of her at some unstated time, partly for the original motive, the loss of her dowry, but "chiefly" for a new motive, because he "*pretended* in her discoveries of dishonour." And lastly, she was living in melancholy with or near her sister at Arbury, at the moated Temple Grange, on the border of the park ; therefore the dejected Mariana is residing in the moated grange at St. Luke's.

The most startling and unpleasant corollary of this identification of Mariana is, that the lord Angelo is Sir William Knollys. But before coming to that question, it may be well to find some evidence that Mary Fitton did actually take up her residence at Temple Grange, and not in Arbury Hall itself. The grange is a good one of its kind, built of red sandstone, with lofty pointed windows in the better wing (now restored after the original design). It is somewhat out of the way and is easily overlooked, about half a mile to the north-west of the Hall, the roofs of which are visible from it among the trees. It is one of those moated houses, of the smaller kind, which stand well back from the moat on all sides, occupying the centre of an enclosed area a hundred yards square, the moat being about twelve feet broad, of some depth, still full of clear water, and planted close round with trees, the roots of which are visible in the steep banks. There is one decayed oak tree behind the house, of huge girth and obviously of high antiquity. Temple House is not of great extent, but it is handsomely built, and sufficient. Tracing its history back, it was repaired about the year 1854, at which time a fourth part of the moat, on the front or south side, was levelled up. On pulling up the old oaken floors, various relics were found under them, including certain papers which showed that the house had been at one time licensed as an inn (although it is remote from existing public

## MARIANA

roads). What the old tower may contain nobody knows, as it has not been entered for many years.<sup>1</sup> Let it be assumed that the Grange some half mile from Arbury Hall was available in the summer of 1601. Mistress Fitton made a "stolen journey" from London in the company of her father, Sir Edward Fitton, to their home at Gawsorth, near Macclesfield. But she did not remain there long, owing doubtless to a want of sympathy between her and her mother, which is otherwise proved. She came to her sister at Arbury, and resided either in the Hall or, as I maintain, at the adjoining Grange for some time, perhaps intermittently for several years. Her presence with or near her sister is referred to in several letters to Lady Newdigate from Sir William Knollys, Sir Richard Leveson, and Mr. Francis Beaumont. In a letter probably of the year 1603, Knollys writes: "Whether your sister be with you or no, I know not; but, if she be, add something of your love of her for my sake, who could desire nothing more of God than that she were capable of my love, as I have ever meant it; and what will become of it God only knoweth. Let it suffice that my first love shall ever bind me to love her." In the last preserved of Sir William's letters to Lady Newdigate, which may be dated subsequent to July 1603, inasmuch as she is called by the knightly title

<sup>1</sup> The ancient manorial rights of the Templars in the parish of Chilvers Coton did not come into possession of the Newdigates until after 1630, having been held before that time by various persons, perhaps non-resident (Dugdale's *Warwickshire*, p. 1071). But it is nearly certain that the Temple house itself had belonged to the priory of Arbury, as the residence of the "prior of the grange," and that it had gone with the monastery itself at the Dissolution. The foundations of the old monastery have been met with in the park at a spot between the Hall and the Grange. The great quadrangular mansion was built by Sir Edmund Anderson, Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas, and by him transferred in 1586 to the Newdigate family in exchange for their manor of Harefield, in Middlesex, which they afterwards bought back. Temple House is now the North Farm of Arbury, the South Farm on the other side of the Hall being a modern farmhouse, at one time occupied by "old Mr. Evans," as the aged lodge-keeper remembered him, and the birthplace of his daughter by a second wife, Mary Anne Evans, or George Eliot.

## RESIDENCE AT THE GRANGE

which was not conferred on her husband until that date, he implies quite plainly that her sister Mary was not actually with her, but "not far from" her : " You may guess at my meaning. She is not far from you that may decipher this riddle ; and I may boldly say that Mary did not choose the better part. Yet tell her, etc. . . . Yet let me be remembered to you both," etc. Sir William is also a witness to the melancholy of the sister. In one letter he writes : " I know that your sister is apt to be melancholy " ; and in another, relating to a proposed visit to Arbury : " I would not doubt but to pacify, though not thoroughly to purge, that humour of melancholy."

Sir Richard Leveson, a distinguished vice-admiral, whose wife had been lunatic since her first confinement, and who is said in a MS. of Sir Peter Leycester to have been the father of two infants by Mistress Fitton, adds a postscript to his letter of 12th April 1603 : " Commend me to your sister, if she be there." What does "there" mean but some house not the Hall itself, but near enough for Lady Newdigate to have access to? Francis Beaumont, in an undated letter which is placed conjecturally in a sequence as late as 1610 or 1612, writes to Lady Newdigate : " When you see my Counsellor, your only sister, commend, I pray you, unto her mine affectionate love, but not my quintessential ; for that is become a confined recusant, having disavowed sacrifice unto all living temples saving unto the living temple of the fairest and dearest deserving Cynthia." The sacrifice to the living temple appears to be a forced metaphor dragged in by the horns. "Living" temple is a contrast to some inanimate temple in his thoughts, which was probably Temple Grange, the sister's residence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> She was married in 1607 to Captain Polwhele, who had been one of Leveson's naval officers; and resided at Perton, a manor in Shropshire which belonged to Leveson, and became hers eventually. Her husband died soon, and it is possible that she may have returned to Arbury for a time before her second marriage.

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Who was this Francis Beaumont? Lady Newdigate-Newdegate, to whom we owe the publication of these and other invaluable letters, has been very careful in her identifications and datings; and I do not doubt that she is right in making him out to be a certain Francis, eventually Master of the Charterhouse, who was one of several literary Beaumonts, and a cousin of Francis Beaumont, of Grace Dieu, the distinguished dramatist who worked with Fletcher. Some critics of the *Gossip from a Muniment Room* have guessed that Lady Newdigate's correspondent was the poet himself; and, although the objections to that seem insuperable, there is a strong temptation to bring Francis Beaumont, the poet, into the circle of Mistress Fitton's admirers. This suggestion arises, in a curious way, from the song in 'Measure for Measure':

Take, O, take those lips away.

In the play a boy is made to sing it to Mariana at the moated grange, who says, at the end of one verse, "Break off thy song"—meaning that there was more to follow. So, it appears, there was; for the same first verse, which was not printed until 'Measure for Measure' came out in the folio of 1623, appeared also in 1639 in one of the posthumous Fletcher plays, *The Bloody Brother*, followed by a second verse:

Take, O, take those lips away,  
That so sweetly were forsworn ;  
And those eyes, the break of day,  
Lights that do mislead the morn ;  
But my kisses bring again, [bring again] :  
Seals of love, but sealed in vain, [sealed in vain].

Hide, O, hide those hills of snow  
Which thy frozen bosom bears,  
One whose tops the pinks that grow  
Are of those that April wears.  
But first set my poor heart free,  
Bound in those icy chains by thee.

## A SONG AT THE GRANGE

Both verses were assigned to Shakespeare in the new edition of his ‘Poems’ published the year after, 1640. The singular thing is, that something like the rhythms and ideas of both verses are found in an undoubted poem of Francis Beaumont’s, “The Willing Prisoner to his Mistress,” 3rd and 4th verses :

Hide not those panting balls of snow  
With envious veils from my beholding ;  
Unlock those lips, their pearly row  
In a sweet smile of love unfolding.

And let those eyes, whose motion wheels  
The restless fate of every lover,  
Survey the pains my sick heart feels,  
And wounds themselves have made discover.

The song “Take, O, take” may be received as Shakespeare’s in both verses<sup>1</sup>; it contains the same compliment to his mistress’ eyes as he had paid to them in the 132nd Sonnet. To account for its having been printed in full in *The Bloody Brother* (quarto of 1639), we have only to assume that he had given it to Fletcher, or to Beaumont himself because he knew the lady of the moated grange. Grace Dieu, his father’s or brother’s house, was some twenty miles from Arbury; other

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Swinburne (*A Study of Shakespeare*, 1880, p. 205) has been at pains to prove that the second verse could not have been by Shakespeare, because it does not end with the same rhythm as the first, and because “the words are such as absolutely to defy antiphonal repetition or reverberation of the three last in either line.” If the second verse had been sung to the same music as the first, it would have read :

But first set my poor heart free, poor heart free,  
Bound in icy chains by thee, chains by thee.

The awkwardness of the result is a sufficient reason why Shakespeare did not try a repetition with the second verse also, or why only one verse was given to the boy to sing. The repetition in the first verse is obviously for the sake of the music, composed by John Wilson, who wrote the music also for “Sigh no more, ladies,” and “Pardon, goddess of the night.” (Collier, on the evidence of a MS. of Earl Ferrers.) It is perhaps only a coincidence, that a topic in two of the letters of Francis Beaumont to Lady Newdigate is, the way in which Orlando di Lasso ends his songs abruptly “on a black crotchet,” which the writer believed to be more effective than a dying fall. The duke in ‘Twelfth Night’ preferred the latter.

## MARIANA

Beaumonts were planted in the district between ; and it is likely enough that the two cousins Francis may both have been visitors at Temple Grange. It is a further coincidence, that Grace Dieu was the Augustinian nunnery of those parts, just as Arbury was the Augustinian priory. Shakespeare places both a monastery and a nunnery in the neighbourhood of Mariana's residence, the former being required by the duke to get his monkish disguise from, the latter for the retreat of Isabella, who had, for some reason, newly joined a sisterhood of Clare nuns. The duke disguised as a friar brings us to Shakespeare's own part, or point of view, in the play. He is himself the disguised duke. His private thought is betrayed by a singular slip or inconsistency. The duke has newly left his capital, on a supposed distant journey ; the action develops from point to point with no delay, and has advanced so far as to require his visit to the moated grange. He enters in his monkish garb, and Mariana at once stops the boy's singing :

Break off thy song and haste thee quick away :  
Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice  
*Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.*  
I cry you mercy, sir, and well could wish  
You had not found me here so musical :  
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,  
My mirth it much displeased, but pleased my wo.

There is nothing in the sequel to show that Mariana had mistaken him for another. The same monk had been often there before, and yet the duke had newly assumed the disguise of a monk. When the duke had gone just before to the monastery, and confided his purpose of disguise to Friar Thomas, the latter assumed that his Grace was bent upon a frolic ; which gives the author the opportunity of thus explaining his true motive in visiting Mariana, and of refuting, in anticipation, the insinuations of the cynical Lucio concerning the “duke of dark corners” :

## THE DISGUISED DUKE

No, holy father, throw away that thought :  
Believe not that the dribbling dart of love  
Can pierce a complete bosom. Why I desire thee  
To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose  
More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends  
Of burning youth.

Mariana is made to say, in a soliloquy, that this man of comfort had often stilled her brawling discontent. Although this is a dramatic inconsistency, it would hardly be there if it did not express Shakespeare's private thought. Those visits to the grange, from a motive "more grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends of burning youth," bring to mind another sketch by the same pen, in that strange poem 'A Lover's Complaint' which he appended to the Sonnets in 1609. The scene of it may well have been the moated grange itself. The opening lines—

From off a hill whose concave womb re-worded  
A plaintful story from a sistering vale—

would suit the situation of Temple Grange, which has a steep hill on its northern side as well as hilly ground a little way off on the west; there is also a stream near it, like that in another stanza of the poem. The visitor lays him down to listen to the tale, and

Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale  
Tearing of papers, breaking rings a-twain,  
Storming her world with sorrow's wind and rain.

Her identity is probably concealed under her singular (heraldic?) head-dress :

Upon her head a platted hive of straw,

which is also described as a "sheaved hat." Her visitor would have been none other than the author of the Sonnets himself, now residing in the country :

A reverend man that grazed his cattle nigh—  
Sometime a blusterer, that the ruffle knew  
Of court, of city, and had let go by  
The swiftest hours, observed as they flew—  
Towards this afflicted fancy fastly drew,

## MARIANA

And, privileged by age, desires to know  
In brief the grounds and motives of her woe.

So slides he down upon his grained bat  
And, comely-distant, sits he by her side ;  
When he again desires her, being sat,  
Her grievance with his hearing to divide ;  
If that from him there may be aught applied  
Which may her suffering ecstasy assuage,  
'Tis promised in the charity of age.

"Father," she says, "though in me you behold  
The injury of many a blasting hour,  
Let it not tell your judgement I am old ;  
Not age, but sorrow, over me hath power," etc.

At the close of his visit to the moated grange, the disguised duke says : "But make haste, the vaporous night approacheth." And that, I doubt not, was what Shakespeare said on more than one occasion, when he had been to see Mariana, and thought of the way back, perhaps no farther than Coventry that night.

We come at length to the unpleasant subject of the lord Angelo, the irreproachable governor, who made so unaccountable a slip from virtue and behaved so meanly in trying to cover his fault. His old friend Escalus (Fulke Greville, Aulces[tri]s) says :

I am sorry one so learned and so wise  
As you, Lord Angelo, have still appeared  
Should slip so grossly, both in the heat of blood  
And lack of temper'd judgement afterward.

Shakespeare found the part of Angelo ready to his hand in Whetstone's Promos : he invented nothing in the character, which is exactly the same in the older play. Promos is a "grey beard," a man of austere life, who is strangely tempted by the beauty and virtues of Cassandra when she comes to beg her brother's life. After she leaves him on the first occasion, he exclaims :

O God, I feel a sodainc change.  
Fie, Promos, fie ! of her avoid the thought !

## A SECOND HEROINE

This is a sufficiently promising dramatic situation without any deeper or ulterior design. But the changes that were made in the rest of the plot show that the author *had* an ulterior design, and that he had gone back to Whetstone's old play because he found in it the germ of a situation which was near enough to a real one within his own experience. It is his division of the part of Cassandra between two, Isabella and Mariana, that reveals his private purpose. Although this doubling of the female part has the great dramatic recommendation of enabling Isabella to repel her brother's plea with indignation, and to temporise with Angelo, thus giving the opportunity for a noble eloquence which is perhaps the chief charm of the play, yet it has a drawback in the unpleasant incident of the substitution (the same as in 'All's Well that Ends Well'), which has been pronounced "disgusting" by a modern critic. It will be seen from the ballad of "The Happy Adventure" that they thought less seriously of it in those days of pre-contracts. Shakespeare would have avoided it if he could ; but as it was his primary object to bring in Mariana, he had to put up with the conditions. The first thing that we learn of her is, that she had been contracted to Angelo five years before. It is upon this matter of the prenuptial contract that the whole question of the identity of Angelo turns. The irreproachable deputy of the duke, learned and wise, is so generic that he need not differ from the austere and scrupulous grey beard of Whetstone, who found him in an old Italian story. But an elderly statesman who was contracted to a young lady of position, and had broken off the contract on a certain pretence, is Knollys so exactly, that he can hardly have been meant for any one else, or for no one in particular. The very date of the contract, five years before, is curiously near the date, 1598, of those letters of Sir William, in which he writes confidentially to Anne Newdigate of his hopes to marry her sister, Mary

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Fitton, and get children by her. He was still tied, it is true, to his wife, the dowager Countess of Chandos ; but he made it a matter of his prayers to be soon released from her, and he asked his correspondent to pray for that also. So far as a married man hoping soon to be a widower could enter into a contract for his next marriage, he had done so ; he himself wrote, some years after, of the “bands” that had formerly existed between him and Mistress Fitton. She had been led to understand that she was to wait for the old Lady Chandos’ shoes ; while Sir William, on his part, believed that he was nurturing her—his figures of speech are always from gardening and agriculture—to be his future wife and the mother of his hoped-for progeny. There is not a suspicion of anything improper. He writes to her sister, that Mary used to quote the proverb “While the grass grows the horse starves”; on which he quotes Ps. 37 : “But both she and I must have patience, and that will bring peace at the last.” From all that is known of him (without begging the question of his identity with certain Shakespearian parts), he appears to have been a man of strict life, studious, and indifferent to the frivolities amidst which he lived as Comptroller of the Household—*censor regiae*.

If Knollys was austere and pedantic, the young lady of his choice was different. The authentic testimony to her wit is remarkable ; for example, Francis Beaumont, in a letter assigned to 1611, writes to Lady Newdigate, that her sister was “more fine and pretty than spark of velvet, and as witty as Pallas is.” There can be no question that she is the witty Rosaline of ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost.’ Her devotion to the stage is shown, among other proofs, by the fact that Will Kempe, the comedian of the Globe company, dedicated to her (mistaking her Christian name) his *Morrice Dance to Norwich*. Witty herself, she was an admirer of wit in others. The wittiest man of his time, Shakespeare, the player and playwright, had become known to her

## “THE CHILD OF STATE”

through the not infrequent theatricals at Court. The degree of intimacy which had grown up between them is clear from what Biron says of Rosaline, and Rosaline of Biron. One great attraction for him, the same that drew him so closely to Lord Herbert, was to find himself appreciated. It is easy to believe how attracted he must have been by high breeding and the manners of the great world. Meanwhile came the lady's amour with Lord Herbert, and the fruit of it, prematurely still-born (Sonnets 99 and 123). About a year after, there was another infant, which came to the birth and was the cause of a great Court scandal. Lord Pembroke cleared himself of the filiation charge, and we know nothing further of the case than we can decipher from one or two of the sonnets.

The existence of a mysterious third lover is pointed at in the “they” sections of S. 121, and in the whole of S. 124 upon the death of the “unfathered” infant. In the former, “they” are contrasted with the author himself in respect of “their” virility. In the latter, the same person is assumed, no question, to be the father, whilst his identity is pointed at not altogether vaguely. The language of the sonnet is of purpose made oblique, elliptical, and actually ungrammatical ; but a meaning can be found for it as one of a sequence, all dealing with the disputed paternity of Mistress Fitton's child :

If my dear love were but the child of State,  
It might for Fortune's bastard be unfather'd,  
As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,  
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.  
No, it was builded far from accident :  
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls  
Under the blow of thralled discontent,  
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls :  
It fears not policy, that *Heretic*,  
Which works on leases of short-number'd hours,  
But all alone stands hugely politic,  
That it nor grows with heat nor drowns with showers.  
To this I witness call the foals of Time,  
Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime.

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The writer's "dear love" at this stage of his correspondence with Pembroke is matter of irony only. The sonnet is a whole series of ironical negatives, under the guise of which we are told the history of a certain child. It was "the child of State"; it was "unfathered," or deserted by its real father, so that it became Fortune's bastard, or anybody's child. It was thrown out as a weed, when it might have been gathered as a flower. It suffered under "smiling pomp," and [with the mother] under the blow of "thralled discontent." This love-child [and the love which bore it] had nothing to hope, much to fear, from Policy, that *Heretic*, "which works on leases of short-number'd hours." Policy was hugely politic, like a huge pole standing stiffly aloof. The infant which had grown with heat was drowned with showers; but the pole was insensible to both, affected neither by inward feeling nor another's tears. In witness whereof he calls the foals of Time, the casual offspring, which die for the good of those by whose crime they had life.

The key to the identity is the word printed in italics with a capital—"policy, that *Heretic*." Heretic in those days might mean a Puritan, as in Ben Jonson's definition, *Puritanus Hypocrita est Haereticus*, etc. But there is a double meaning, the second sense being the original Greek one of "free to choose," which is implied in the lines :

As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,  
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.

I submit that the whole sonnet points to Mr. Comptroller unmistakably, if very darkly. Firstly, he was a "heretic" in the above sense of Puritan, being the son of a Puritan and carefully brought up by a tutor who suffered in the Marian persecutions. Secondly, he was at the same time a courtier noted for his "policy." His motto, as on his engraved portrait, was curiously apt to his politic nature, "*In utrumque*

## “POLICY, THAT HERETIC”

*paratus,*” his bland and sedate features (“smiling pomp”) harmonising well both with motto and reputation. Thirdly, there is a pun in “policy,” in respect of the pole or white staff which he carried as the emblem of his office in the Household. The same jest of “pole” and “policy” reappears more than once with Polonius, whose name means the man with the pole.

The next sonnet, 125, contains the sequel and conclusion of the unfathered-child incident, namely, the quarrel with Lord Pembroke on account of suborned information which “impeached” the poet himself. Some one must have had an intelligible motive for suborning the information. Now Polonius has a whole scene given to him for the purpose of exhibiting him as a suborner of information, so as to “impeach” (the word is actually used in the first quarto but changed in the second) the conduct of his son in Paris in matters of the same indelicate kind. But the question of Polonius must be reserved for the next chapter.

The person pointed at in the 124th Sonnet may be taken to have held aloof; but it may seem unnecessary to infer that he was under any particular obligation to come forward. Here we have the means of hearing the other side. Knollys himself adverts, in more than one letter, to the unhappy event which seemed for a time to have ruined his prospects of married happiness with Mrs. Fitton. He had done his best, he writes, to be “the true husbandman,” but “the man of sin” sowed tares in the night. “The man of sin” is such a phrase as a Puritan might have been expected to use; in its original meaning of “the mystery of iniquity” it is even felicitous, for the identity of the party is hinted at as darkly as in the famous passage of Second Thessalonians. Some one, however, was in the writer’s mind, for he uses the definite article; and it is almost implied that his correspondent was in the secret. Her sister’s loves were complicated: she had three Wills. Shakespeare’s last reference to the

## MARIANA

matter is in the last sonnet of the series written to his mistress, the 152nd. Assuming it to correspond in date with the close of the other series to Lord Pembroke, it was written after her mishap and disgrace:

In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn ;  
But thou art twice forsworn to me love swearing :  
In act thy bed-vow broke, and new faith torn ;  
In vowing new hate after new love bearing.

These lines are full of his peculiar wit, irrepressible even when his matter is serious. They are not simply antithetic, but doubly so, the ideas being as compacted as the symbols of an algebraical formula, but also as exact and separable. His own forswearing is a simple matter—his infidelity to his wife at Stratford. But in swearing love to him, at that late date, the lady was forsworn in a very intricate way. The second respect in which she was forsworn, in the fourth line, was “in vowing new hate after new love bearing.” Bearing is here literally “giving birth to”; and that had happened twice—recently and formerly. The old occasion was her still-born child in the spring of 1600, “the forward violet” of S. 99, which was the fruit of her amour with Lord Herbert. There is no direct evidence that she bore his lordship hate after it; but it may be inferred that their relations ceased; and it was known to Shakespeare that Lord Pembroke was not the father of the second child. The same thing happened with that: she bore hatred to its father. This is the dualism, and these the antitheses, of the fourth line; the same moral paradox occurred twice—she bore a love-child and hated the father of it. She was “forsworn” in an intransitive sense—not *to* any one. The other forswearing, in the third line, was of the same kind, and also a dualism—“in act thy bed-vow broke and new faith torn.” This it was which preceded the “new love bearing.” Therein she had broken her “bed-vow,” and torn up her “new faith,” which may have meant the fresh start after her first mishap. But what was her “bed-vow”?

## "THY BED-VOW BROKE"

Shakespeare uses elsewhere the words "vow," "bed-right," and the like, but "bed-vow" only this once. It cannot mean a nuptial vow, but a prenuptial, the implication of which was "no bed-right to be paid," as he makes plain by other words in Prospero's admonition to Ferdinand after his betrothal to Miranda in 'The Tempest.' Mistress Fitton had such a prenuptial contract with Sir William Knollys, and had broken it—with whom? The words "in act" are an antithesis which means that the vow was broken by the respective parties to it between themselves. That hypothesis gives a consistent meaning to all that is said of the matter, both directly in the Sonnets and obliquely in the plays. But it is at variance with Knollys's accusation of the "man of sin"; and there is only a little of documentary evidence which may enable one to judge between the two sides. It is not necessary, for the understanding of Shakespeare's occult meaning, that we should form any opinion on the merits. He believed that he was upon firm ground of fact, and it is clear from the 119th Sonnet that the lady gave him some startling information. His conviction was clear, both as to the primary guilt of Knollys and as to his "lack of temper'd judgement afterward" in shielding himself behind a plausible accusation of "the man of sin." And he took his scenic revenge in creating the part of Polonius, which reads to us now as if he must have enjoyed the writing of it.

The little external evidence that there is consists of these facts: that Mistress Fitton did show coldness, if not dislike and hate, to Sir William Knollys after her disgrace, and that he himself did use the language of compunction at a later period, offering to renew his engagement as if to make amends. His attitude at the time of her fall is nowhere indicated. It happened that he was then preoccupied with a great affair of State, the trial of his nephew, Lord Essex, for treason, which happened in the very same weeks of February 1601

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in which the Fitton scandal became known. Mr. Comptroller was one of the Queen's most trusted counsellors ; he earned her gratitude for his conduct in the Essex business, and had the honour of entertaining her Majesty at his country house near Caversham in the autumn of the same year. The exigencies of his position in the State may have made it impossible for him to help his *fiancée*. But it appears that his correspondent, Lady Newdigate, who received all his confidences about her sister, had not been writing to him, or had ceased writing to him, at the time of the family trouble, and that Knollys sent a message to her, through her great-uncle in London, that he wished to hear from her. After Mistress Fitton had gone to her sister, Knollys wrote : “How much more unhappy am I, who though with all the care and industry I can use to bring this soil to her former goodness, yet it is impossible for me to prevail. And, God knows, I would refuse no penance to redeem what is lost. I write not this to grieve her whom I have so much loved, nor your good self ; for there can be no greater punishment to me than to be a cause of either your sadness.” *Non liquet.* But why does he speak at all of his penance and punishment ? His letters abound in metaphors and allegories, but he knew the correct use of words.

The conduct of Angelo to Mariana in the play has a certain resemblance to this real case. Shakespeare found in the old ballad a contract broken off on purely mercenary grounds, because the lady's dowry had been lost in a trading venture. He raised the social status of parties above the trading class, and, as he wished for some reason to keep this loss of the dowry as a minor motive, he made it to be lost at sea with the lady's brother, who was a “great soldier.” But the contract was broken off “chiefly” because Angelo “pretended in her discoveries of dishonour.” He left her, but the circumstances of his leaving her were not generally known ; for example, Isabella did not know them :

## A REAL CASE

*Isab.* Can this be so? did Angelo so leave her?

*Duke.* Left her in her tears, and dried not one of them with his comfort; swallowed his vows whole, pretending in her discoveries of dishonour; in few, bestowed her on her own lamentation, which she yet wears for his sake; and he, a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not.

*Isab.* What a merit were it in death to take this poor maid from the world! What corruption in this life, that it will let this man live!

“He a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not” is a peculiar phrase which can hardly be matched except in the language of S. 124, the pole stuck in the ground, which neither “grows with heat nor drowns with showers.”

Angelo’s lapse from his austere virtue, his own breach of the obsolete law which he had presumed to revive, is, of course, carried out under the conditions of the plot. But the circumstances of the assignation are given with a curious particularity, which is not called for by way of picturesqueness, and need not have been so minute in the mouth of Isabella in order to be real. There is just a suggestion of these details of locality in the ballad of “The Happy Adventure”—a garden gate, one pair of stairs, and a chamber next to the bower. In Whetstone’s original, Cassandra simply repairs to the house of Promos in the disguise of a page. But this is a description of some actual place known to the writer:

*Duke.* What is the news of this good deputy?

*Isab.* He hath a garden circummured with brick,  
Whose western side is with a vineyard back’d:  
And to that vineyard is a planched gate,  
That makes his opening with this bigger key:  
This other doth command a little door  
Which from the vineyard to the garden leads.  
There have I made my promise  
Upon the heavy middle of the night  
To call upon him.

The time of Mistress Fitton’s mishap, which had so far-reaching consequences, can be assigned, in the usual

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way of reckoning, to midsummer 1600. It has been matter of conjecture before (by Mrs. Stopes in the *Shakespeare Jahrbücher*, 1890) that the actual occasion of it was the festivities attending the marriage of another of the maids-of-honour, Mistress Bess Russell, at Blackfriars, in the middle of June. The Court was at Greenwich, and came up, all the maids-of-honour and the great officers of State, in eighteen coaches to grace the wedding, the Queen herself attending. The marriage was on Monday, the Queen stayed the night at the house of Lord Cobham, and returned to Greenwich on Tuesday, leaving nearly all her suite to continue the gaieties until Thursday. It was Mistress Fitton's moment of highest feather. She led the masque, and had the honour of giving her hand to the old Queen herself to join in the dance. When her Majesty asked her allegorical name in the masque, she answered "Affection," although it was really something else; to which the Queen wittily replied, "Affection is false." In these unguarded hours of gaiety and elation, she yielded to the solicitation of some one, who did not find it convenient to "justify" her when the time came. The child was "the child of State." The mother was a maid-of-honour, the father probably a courtier also. He corresponds to the personage in the 124th Sonnet, and to the Lord Angelo of the play, who did "slip so grossly in the heat of blood and in lack of temper'd judgement afterward." Probably we should not have heard of him, nor had such a problem to deal with as the pardon of Angelo in the play, had it not been that Shakespeare himself was a party in the case. We understand why the ethics of 'Measure for Measure' are empirical as soon as we discover real persons behind the parts of Angelo, Mariana, and the disguised duke.

## CHAPTER XIV

### HAMLET'S REVENGE

THE first time that Hamlet opens his mouth, it is to utter a dark oracle—"A little more than kin and less than kind." After the plot has proceeded half-way, he announces again, this time in the plainest terms, that there is an undivulged secret: "You would pluck out the heart of my mystery." Even if 'Hamlet' were not thus declared to be a riddle, the enormous amount of writing upon it, from so various points of view, would confess the fact. It is at once an enigma and a good acting play. Schlegel and others have been surprised at the success of the piece upon the stage, considering the amount of mystery in it. It is not unlikely, however, that Shakespeare reckoned from the first upon holding the attention of the public by that very element of mystery. His great rival, Ben Jonson, did not think that deep wit was legitimate upon the stage. In conversing with Drummond, at Hawthornden, in 1619, he appealed to the authority of Horace, *Turpe est difficiles amare nugas*; and in his own work he was plain enough to be understood by any one at the time. Against the authority of Horace may be set the example of Aristophanes, much of whose wit and obscure allusion is said to have escaped even the sharp-witted Athenians themselves, although they expected no less than to have their sharp palates gratified. The Elizabethan age was the great age of English wit, and Shakespeare was the wittiest of all that nimble company. As it was the

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Athenian audience that put Aristophanes upon his mettle, so there were always some among Shakespeare's hearers who would encourage him to try how deep and subtle he could be (notably the two persons for whom he wrote the Sonnets). According to Francis Beaumont, in the verses which he wrote for Ben Jonson's *Fox* in 1605, it had become an affectation to admire the obscure and unintelligible :

But since our subtle gallants think it good  
To like of naught that may be understood,  
Lest they should be disproved.

This taste of the time, as well as Shakespeare's more than willingness to gratify it, should account for what Hallam thought a blemish in his work : "It is impossible to deny that innumerable lines in Shakespeare were not more intelligible in his time than they are at present. Can we justify the very numerous passages which yield to no interpretation, knots which are never unloosed, which conjecture does but cut ?" Can we justify the whole play of 'Hamlet' ? A vast literature of books, papers, and editorial notes is the somewhat ambiguous answer. No fabled riddle of the ancient world has ever so held men's attention. Shakespeare did well for his own fame in making his play Hamlet's mystery, although there have not been wanting critics to maintain that it does not add to his real reputation.

It is not out of the question, that the great vogue of 'Hamlet' as a *philosophic* problem has been a contingency which the author did not foresee. This is not to say, as some have said, that he threw it off easily, as if he were unconscious of his own depth and unconscious of intellectual effort ; a comparison of the first quarto with the second will show how careful and minute his touches had been ; and what he perfected so carefully, he wrote with deep intent. But it does not follow that he was always conscious of that deep philosophy of life which is certainly present in two or three of the soliloquies,

## AN ENIGMA CONFESSED

and is sought for by German and other critics throughout the whole plan and action of the piece ; such an abstract purpose, for example, as Professor Karl Werder finds in it, *die Darstellung der Gerechtigkeit auf Erden*, the exhibition of justice upon the earth. Goethe has left, in the Conversations with Eckermann, a view of the author's method, which is likely enough to be right, so far as it goes, inasmuch as one imaginative genius will see into the mind of another :

“ Shakespeare was inspired with the first thought of his ‘ Hamlet ’ when the spirit of the whole presented itself to his mind as an unexpected impression, and he surveyed the several situations, characters, and conclusion in an elevated mood, as a pure gift from above, on which he had no immediate influence, although the possibility of conceiving such a thought certainly presupposed a mind such as his. But the individual scenes, and the dialogue of the characters, he had completely in his power, so that he might produce them daily and hourly, and work at them for weeks if he liked.”

This inspired or “ unexpected ” impression upon his mind was reproduced in its entirety in the first quarto (1603), which, although little more than half the length of the second (1604), contains the whole of the action, all the enigmatic talk and songs of the lunatic Ophelia (save a couple of lines), and all the enigmatic conduct and speeches of Hamlet, with the exception of two interpolated remarks. What Goethe supposes he saw as if in a flash during one of his elevated moods, he produced on the stage in the summer of 1602 as a complete action, from which he never varied except to remove certain appearances of inconsistency, or, at all events, to try to remove them. What was this unity which he saw as in a vision from beginning to end ? What was “ the spirit of the whole,” which “ presented itself to his mind as an unexpected impression ” ? We are safe to answer, in the first place, that it was Kyd’s old play of *Hamlet’s Revenge* which came into his mind, a play

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which had been on the boards in London for a dozen years or more, and was so familiar that the name of Hamlet had become proverbial for a revengeful madman. Secondly, one may be almost as sure that he was not merely casting about for a new subject, but that the revenge theme was what he specially wanted. Thirdly, and most nearly to the point of Goethe's question, the *spirit* of the whole, as it presented itself to him in a moment of exaltation, was the idea of executing revenge by cunning or mystification, which was indeed the idea of the old Hamlet legend. Develop this germinal idea of enigmatic purpose, and we begin to see a design. He might have called his new piece the Riddle of the Sphinx, a riddle in five acts, as much a riddle at last as at first, and a riddle both of the hero and the heroine.

The use of enigma in tragedy had been introduced upon the Attic stage. In comedy the Errors was a favourite subject, and Shakespeare himself had used it with more than classical ingenuity. Although the enigma in the opening scene of 'Pericles' is not his, and is dropped at once as impracticable, yet he must have known the intention of it. He makes Don Armado refer learnedly to enigma, and, in a not distant context, to Samson and Delilah. Every one knew Samson's riddle, and every reflective person knew the principle upon which it was constructed: it turns ostensibly upon a unique incident known only to himself, which no one could possibly guess,—a bees' nest built inside the skeleton of a lion which Samson himself had killed and concealed. In this classical example the enigma is insoluble until we are told the facts in Samson's exclusive possession, and then it is no enigma at all. What was good enough for Samson was good enough for Shakespeare. Out of incidents or experiences known only to himself, or at least unknown to his audience or his readers, he could construct a dramatic riddle, which would remain a riddle until the matters of fact were

## NEW FACTS

known (if they should ever be); and then it would be no riddle at all.<sup>1</sup>

Although it is still usual in writings upon Shakespeare of the very latest date to say that little new about his life has been found out since Malone's great harvest of documents more than a century ago, excepting the discovery of his marriage bond, yet there have been two notable discoveries, within the last half-dozen years, which will be seen ere long in their full importance. The first of these was the discovery by Lady Newdigate-Newdegate, in the muniment-room at Arbury Hall, of a series of fourteen letters written by Sir William Knollys, Comptroller of Queen Elizabeth's Household, to the first Lady Newdigate, from which it is clear that Sir William was the avowed suitor and expectant husband of that lady's younger sister, Mary Fitton, otherwise known to fame as a mistress of Lord Pembroke, and suspected to have been the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. As soon as this correspondence was printed in 1897, it was perceived by Mr. William Archer that Sir William Knollys, the lover of Mary Fitton, fell naturally into the place of the third *Will* in the Sonnets, the other two being William Herbert, Lord Pembroke, and William the poet himself. But it was still denied by some among the partisans of the several hypotheses of the Sonnets that the male person addressed in them was actually William Herbert. His identity is really the keystone of an arch of probabilities. Here comes in the second of the recent documentary discoveries, which was made by myself, and has been dealt with at the beginning of Chapter III., namely, that the disgraced maid-of-honour, the White Doe, Mistress

<sup>1</sup> Although Samson's riddle on the surface is one that cannot be guessed until a certain private incident has been divulged, and is thereafter so jejune that it is not really a riddle at all, yet it would hardly be in the Book of Judges unless it had a deeper meaning. I have ventured upon a theory of it in a recent paper, "On Indications of the Hashisch Vice in the Old Testament," in a journal for the history of medicine, *Tanus* (Haarlem), viii. June 1903.

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

Fitton, had been the mistress of “the clown” before “Pembroke strook her down,” which is exactly the situation of Shakespeare’s mistress in the Sonnets. What the Arbury letters proved was, that her third lover was Sir William Knollys, the Comptroller of the Household. We should never have known that Knollys was the lover and the prospective husband of Shakespeare’s Dark Lady but for the publication of his fourteen letters seven years ago ; Knollys had asked his correspondent to burn them, but the request had not been attended to, as often happens ; and so we are in possession of a Shakespearian secret, which is not only the key to the later of the sonnets, in both the male and female series, but the key to two of the great plays. One of these, ‘Measure for Measure,’ I have taken out of its chronological order so as to state the matters of fact and of probability between Sir William Knollys and Mistress Fitton, and so as to clear the way for the earlier, more vindictive, and thoroughly enigmatic handling of the same theme in ‘Hamlet.’ Premising all that has been advanced under the heads of the Sonnets and of ‘Measure for Measure’ concerning Mistress Fitton’s three lovers, and the disputed paternity of that unwelcome infant which brought so much trouble to so many, I come to the same matters of fact as underlying the enigma of ‘Hamlet’—matters within the private knowledge of the author, out of which he constructed a dramatic riddle on the same principle as Samson’s.

Any one reading the old Hamlet legend, whether in the original Latin of *Saxo Grammaticus* or in the nearly literal French of *Belleforest*, will be impressed by one scene in particular as the most vivid, as well as the most characteristic, of the whole : it is the scene where Hamlet enters to have the interview with his mother. He enters with his nose in the air ; instead of making his salutation to his mother, he walks deliberately to a corner of the room in which is a heap of cushions, or coverings of some kind (*strumentum*). He jumps upon

## CORAMBIS

the heap and begins flapping his arms like a cock his wings upon a dunghill ; something stirs under the weight of his feet, whereupon he draws his weapon and drives it through the heap until the point sticks in the floor ; there is a groan, and a trickling of blood from under the heap ; he drags out a man's body, quarters it, and sends the pieces to be boiled in a cauldron and thrown to the pigs. The victim is the counsellor, who is in attendance upon the queen to hear what passes. Hamlet is aware of his presence by intuition, and treats him with barbaric contempt, the moral being, So perish all eavesdroppers.

## CORAMBIS

The counsellor is unnamed, and had not appeared in the story before. When the legend was dramatised in London, about 1589 or earlier, his part had almost certainly been developed, and he had received a name ; but no one knows what his name was, what part was given him, or whether he had a son, or a daughter, or both. Shakespeare erected him into a part of the first rank, and called him originally Corambis, which was changed two years after (in 1604) into Polonius, which means the Pole, or the man with the pole, from his white staff or pole of office as chamberlain, or treasurer, or comptroller of the household. The name Corambis has never been traced. It is entered in the great *Onomasticon*, or Dictionary of Proper Names, by Forcellini, with a cross-reference to "Crambis" ; but on looking for Crambis, one can find no such entry, so that Forcellini was obviously at fault. The name has all the look of a new coinage, and may be confidently derived from *Coram nobis*, "before us," a synecdoche for the magistrate who had poor wretches haled before him, "coram nobis," as in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*.<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare uses the prepositional half,

<sup>1</sup> In Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* (1578), which Shakespeare was using for the plot of 'Measure for Measure' about the same time that he

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*Coram*, as one of the titles of Justice Shallow in the opening scene of the ‘Merry Wives of Windsor.’ But why should *Coram-nobis* be a suitable name for one in the position of Polonius, who had no magisterial duties? The answer to that question will reveal a good deal more than might have been expected from its minor importance and merely curious interest.

Amongst the various titles and dignities of Justice Shallow in the opening scene of ‘The Merry Wives of Windsor,’ that of *Coram* recalls the fact that he was a magistrate, as well as the tradition that he was the magistrate before whom Shakespeare himself had once been cited. Whether it was only an affair of stealing Lucy’s own deer, or something more, it can hardly be doubted that Shakespeare bore a grudge against the Justice, so that he satirised him in two of his plays, in the ‘Merry Wives’ within the legitimate limits of a jest, but in ‘2 Henry IV.’ in a malicious caricature, which was not printed until a few weeks after Sir Thomas Lucy’s death in the summer of 1600. Therefore, when we find the same suggestion of a magisterial inquisition in the name Corambis, we are led to think of something else rankling in the author’s mind. According to his own statement in the 125th Sonnet, he had been “impeacht” in the matter of Mistress Fitton by an “informer” who had been “suborned.” All the terms

was writing ‘Hamlet’ (see p. 353), the idea of fishing is associated with an examining magistrate, just as it is associated with Polonius, or Corambis, as “a fishmonger,” or an employer of others to fish. The following is the passage, spoken by Phallax, a corrupt justice :

While favours last, then good, I fish for gain ;  
(For grace will not bite always at my bait) ;  
And, as I wish, at hand good fortune see :  
Here come Rapax and Gripax ; but what’s this ?  
As good as fair handsel God grant it be,  
The knaves bring a woman *coram nobis*.

In the old German version of ‘Hamlet,’ *Der bestrafte Brudermord*, a performance of which, at Dresden, can be traced as far back as 1626 (printed text no farther than 1710), the parts are essentially Shakespearian ; the name of the chamberlain is Corambus, Ophelia is Ofelia, Leartes is Leonhardus, and Osric is Phantasmo ; while the king and queen are given Danish or Norse names.

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are legal ; and the natural sequel to them would have been “cited” and “examined,” as we know that Lord Pembroke had been at an earlier stage of the same filiation inquiry, which was almost bound to go on until some one had been made out to be the father.

The law officer of the Crown who attended to any justiciary business arising within the Queen’s household was the Master of the Court of Requests, at that time a distinguished jurist and scholar, Dr. Julius Cæsar, who became Chancellor of the Exchequer under James. According to the words of the patent of his appointment by Elizabeth, 29th October 1596, he was to receive “a fee of one hundred guineas per annum, in consideration of his attendance on her Majesty’s person and in the Court of Requests.”<sup>1</sup> As the law officer attending on her Majesty’s person, it would have fallen to him to investigate the filiation case which had arisen within the household : the examination of Lord Pembroke in the same matter had been conducted with sufficient formality for Sir Robert Cecil to know of it, and of the first result of it ; and it would ordinarily have been conducted by the Master of the Requests. Assuming that this was the matter in which Shakespeare was “impeacht” at the moment when his lordship was discharged, he also would have been haled in his turn before Dr. Julius Cæsar. There is, of course, no evidence that he was ; is it likely that any documentary proof of such a fact should remain ? I have searched through the index of the numerous MS. memoranda left by Dr. Cæsar, and among his letters to Cecil ; but his notes relate chiefly to cases in the Admiralty Court, and one sees that any record of a private scandal affecting a maid-of-honour and a player is hardly to be looked for in such formal company.

Shakespeare could have borne no such grudge against Dr. Julius Cæsar as he did against Sir Thomas

<sup>1</sup> Lodge’s *Life of Sir Julius Caesar*. London, 1812. On 10th May 1600 he became the senior Master of Requests.

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Lucy, if only for the reason that it was not the law officer of the household who had impeached him ; he had been impeached by an informer, who had been suborned. Now in 'Hamlet,' Corambis is painted at full length, in the opening scene of the second Act, as a suborner, skilled in the arts of subornation ; the scene is introduced mainly in order to exhibit him in that odious light, for nothing turns upon it afterwards ; he instructs his emissary Montanus (afterwards Reynaldo, Edward Reynolds, clerk of the Court of Requests) how to set about procuring information from Danskers in Paris in order to bring home to his own son, Laertes, those specific acts of loose living which he thought antecedently probable. The general principle is summed up in the line :

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth.

When Hamlet next meets Corambis, he surprises him by telling him "Y'are a fishmonger," that is to say, a dealer in what had been fished for, an employer of men to fish for him. But why did he give the name of an examining magistrate, *Coram-nobis*, or Corambis, to a courtier who is indeed represented as a suborner of false information, but has no inquisitorial duties ? The singular fact that the name was changed after two years to Polonius, the man with the pole or white staff of office, which is an appropriate name for a chamberlain, should mean that there was some quirk or double intention in the original name. Corambis was the name given to a person to whom it was inappropriate, in order to include within him the idea of an absent person to whom the name properly belonged. This idea of inclusion, or of the chamberlain in the play containing or covering another personality who is not in the play, is brought out by a curious incident in the dialogue, which is otherwise meaningless. In the third Act, just before the play within the play begins,

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Hamlet turns to Corambis with the remark, not unsuited to the occasion :

*Ham.* My lord, you played once i' the university, you say ?

*Cor.* That did I, my lord ; and was accounted a good actor.

*Ham.* What did you enact ?

*Cor.* I did enact Julius Cæsar : I was killed i' the Capitol ; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.

This is *Doctor Julius Cæsar*, who is personated by Corambis for the occasion, and made to be killed in a play, or in the reminiscence of a play brought up while waiting to witness a play within a play. It is a scenic revenge in the third remove, or as near as Shakespeare cared to bring it. Hamlet ends with a remark which contains two puns and an alliteration, the whole being meant as a flout to Corambis, and a plain indication that Hamlet was mad. Every one laughs when Hamlet turns away from Polonius with the words "so capital a calf." But where is the point ? Why calf ? Why insult him at all ? What has this capable statesman done, the indispensable counsellor of the Danish monarchy, the trusted minister of the new king as of the old, this "good old man" as the queen calls him—what has he done to incur Hamlet's invariable gibes and insults ?

## POLONIUS

Although Polonius is often played as a doddering old man, a forcible-feeble, a proper butt for Hamlet's satire both in his person and his character, yet the discerning critics, Goethe, Tieck, Charles Lamb, and Maginn, make him out to have been a capable statesman, experienced and thoughtful, if somewhat pedantic. Lamb remarks that, in all the Hamlets whom he had seen, the contemptuous treatment of Polonius has been exaggerated, and he might have added that the character of the chamberlain is made contemptible to suit. He

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is aggrieved that what he calls the “temporary deformities” in Hamlet’s conduct should be so emphasised ; but he does not tell us how else the actor could have played with fidelity to the text.<sup>1</sup> Hamlet never misses a chance of gibing at him. In his “lecture and advice” to Reynaldo he is made petty and contemptible in an amusing way. His mannerisms are brought out for laughter, including a certain way of talking, which must have been drawn from the life. He is a subtle politician, with a store of moral tags. Warburton guessed that he read from a table-book the famous maxims which he delivered to Laertes. At that time neither of the two known copies of the first quarto had been found ; but that edition confirms Warburton’s conjecture in a very curious way, the whole of the maxims being printed as quotation, within inverted commas, excepting the two lines upon the dress of the Parisians, which are so different from the rest in their halting style that the editors suspect a corruption of the text :

And they in France of the chief rank and station  
Are of a most select and general chief in that.

After this extempore interpolation, the quotation marks were resumed. So also in the admonition of Polonius to Ophelia, the copy-book maxims are set in inverted commas in the original text :

<sup>1</sup> Lamb had “never seen a player in this character [Hamlet] who did not exaggerate and strain to the utmost these ambiguous features—these temporary deformities in his character. They make him express a vulgar scorn of Polonius which utterly degrades his gentility, and which no explanation can render palatable ; they make him show contempt, and curl up the nose at Ophelia’s father—contempt in its very grossest and most hateful form ; but they get applause by it : it is natural, people say ; that is, the words are scornful, and the actor expresses scorn, and that they can judge of. But why so much scorn, and of that sort, they never think of asking.” It is hardly the business of an actor to “think of asking” why the book indicates scorn ; it is enough for him that it does so consistently. The critic himself, if he has indeed thought of asking, has given a merely empirical and random answer—“ambiguous features,” “temporary deformities,” in Hamlet’s character.

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Ofelia, receive none of his letters,  
‘ For lovers’ lines are snares to intrap the heart.  
‘ Refuse his tokens, both of them are keyes  
To unlocke Chastitie unto Desire :  
Come in, Ofelia, such men often prove  
‘ Great in their wordes, but little in their love.

It was not unusual to preserve such gems of wisdom and wit in table-books ; and Polonius is made to communicate them to his son and daughter in the manner of a pigeon feeding its young.

One of the most significant marks in Polonius is his physique. He is old, but it is carefully implied that he does not look old : that is the meaning of the “heresies,” or the “slanders,” which Hamlet reads from the book of “the satirical rogue,” who “says here, that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams.” In the original, first quarto, the signs of old age, “all which, sir, I most potently believe not,” are hollow eyes, weak backs, grey beards, pitiful weak hams, gouty legs. It is sometimes as difficult to guess the precise meaning of irony as it is always to answer it ; but the point of reading slanders from the satirical book seems to be that these, the conventional signs of old age, were not true of Polonius ; he is complimented ironically upon his vigour and virility. This is the same wit that is used upon Adrian in ‘The Tempest,’ in the wager about “the old cock” and “the cockerel” (see p. 98).

It was true of one statesman of that period, Sir William Knollys. In 1603 he was about sixty, an age which few statesmen of that time exceeded ; but he must have been remarkably well preserved or youthful-looking ; for he lived to the age of eighty-nine or nearly, and was so agile that he rode out on horseback until within a few months of his death. He is the “parti-beard” of the ballad quoted before, which probably means that his

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beard was of mixed colour in 1601. His engraved portrait, taken after 1616, when he was Master of the Wards and Viscount Wallingford, shows him without a wrinkle in his face, with full, clear, steady eyes, a close-trimmed beard, and, one would infer, an erect figure ; although he was then seventy-three, or more, he might pass for a man of fifty or sixty. Polonius would be as old as Hamlet if, like a crab, he could go backward—as, indeed, he could do very well in performing his duties of chamberlain.<sup>1</sup> The irony of all this as applied to Knollys becomes intelligible in the light of the disputed paternity of Mistress Fitton's child. Without that clue, or some other such if it can be found, the innuendoes aimed at Polonius are merely Hamlet's madness—madness without method.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Hunter (*New Illustrations*, 1845, ii. 219) has the following :—"That there was some individual nobleman more particularly pointed at in the character of Polonius, I can entertain no doubt, nor that some attentive observer of the men of those times will one day trace the poet home. Could it be the Lord Chamberlain? Prynne alludes to the practice of bringing living noblemen upon the stage, and names particularly the Lord Admiral, the Lord Treasurer, and Count Gondemar as persons with whom the stage had made free." The Lord Chamberlain (Hunsdon) in the year 1602 would have made a good subject for a stage portrait (had there been any motive, or had it been safe, to exhibit him), according to the following sketch of him in the unprinted ballad (by Churchyard ?) already cited, which may be repeated in this context :

Chamberlin, Chamberlin,  
He's of her Grace's kin.  
Fool hath he ever bin  
With his ponne [puny] silver pin ;  
Fair without, foul within.  
She makes his cockscomb thin,  
And quake in every limb.  
Quicksilver's in his head,  
But his wit's dull as lead.  
Lord, for thy pity !

Sir William Knollys, Lord Hunsdon's colleague at Court, was a more considerable person than this. He was not a fool, nor timorous, nor mercurial. He sat in Parliament, and had weight with the House in matters of supply ; he was an important member of the Privy Council ; and, like Polonius, he was not merely an officer of the Household, but was also in the confidence of the Sovereign for great affairs of State. Amongst the conjectures as to the original of Polonius, there is a half-serious one of Edward FitzGerald (in conversations with James Spedding) that he was Francis Bacon.

## JEPHTHAH, JUDGE OF ISRAEL

The large amount of irony in ‘Hamlet’ has been often remarked. The spirit of the play is so entirely and consistently that which the Greek rhetoricians called Eironeia, or dissimulation, that one might suppose Shakespeare to have been reading something upon the uses of that artifice in the classic drama, or to have been discussing it with a learned man—Camden, perhaps, or Ben Jonson. At the same time, it was in the old Gothic legend that he found the idea of Hamlet affecting madness with a view to accomplish his revenge, which affectation is the leading irony of the play. I shall have to show later how this principle of irony or dissimulation, which is expounded in the play itself under the name of “indirection,” pervades the whole of the plot and much of the dialogue (so that what is said of or to one is sometimes meant for another), and how it has the effect of making the characters of Claudius, Gertrude, and Laertes an empirical patchwork, in which no unity or consistency is discoverable. But it will be necessary to anticipate the more general statement upon the oblique ironies of the play by those instances of irony which are aimed at Polonius directly. There are three principal ones, each of which is a kind of enigma by itself.

(1) *Jephthah, judge of Israel.*—When Polonius enters to announce the arrival of the players, Hamlet addresses him in this unexpected way:

*Ham.* O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou !

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord ?

*Ham.* Why,

‘One fair daughter, and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.’

*Pol.* [Aside] Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i’ the right, old Jephthah ?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows, then, my lord ?

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

*Ham.* Why,

‘As by lot, God wot,’

and then, you know,

‘It came to pass, as most like it was,—

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look where my abridgement comes.

The players enter to cut short a quotation which would have been too pointed if it had been finished. On turning to the pious chanson, or “godly ballet” (of the first quarto), we find the rest of the verse to be :

It came to pass, most like it was  
That great wars there should be;  
And who should be chief but he, but he?

The moral of the story of Jephthah, as given elsewhere by Shakespeare, is :

To keep that oath were more impiety  
Than Jephthah's when he sacrificed his daughter.

Hamlet's innuendo is that Polonius sacrificed Ophelia rather than lose his opportunity of being chief in the “great wars” that were to be. This is exactly the situation of Knollys at the time of Mistress Fitton's trouble. She was, if not his daughter, yet his ward, and contracted to him informally. When she most needed his help, he was preoccupied with a matter that had given him much anxiety for more than a year before, the disaffection of his nephew Lord Essex. In the very midst of the political plot the situation of Mistress Fitton became known to Elizabeth, who placed her in durance, and shortly after caused Lord Pembroke to be imprisoned as the supposed cause of her misfortune. The two sonnets 124 and 152, taken together, contain, according to my reading of them, Shakespeare's assumption that Knollys was the cause. But if we set them aside, whether on the ground that the identity of Knollys cannot be proved in them, or that Shakespeare

## THE THREE CLOUD-SHAPES

cannot be trusted, we have fourteen letters of Mr. Comptroller to the young lady's married sister, in the earlier of which he shows the ardour of a lover, and in the later takes some blame to himself for her melancholy situation, renewing his offer of marriage as if it were on his conscience to make her reparation. At the critical time there are no letters from him, but only a message, conveyed indirectly to his correspondent, that he desired to hear from her. It is hardly doubtful that he held aloof, "was a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not," like the Lord Angelo in 'Measure for Measure.' The unprinted ballad which narrates the event says that he was "afeared" when "they" ran at the herd of deer under his charge, "they" meaning probably the Puritans, to which party Knollys belonged, being the son of a Puritan. His reasons for being afraid might have been private and personal, as well as public and official. If it had been his lot to be suspected by the Queen, as Lord Pembroke was, he could hardly have been free to play the part in the great affairs of State which he did play in those very weeks. If he was not literally the "chief" in the "great wars" that should be, he was very prominent, and was honoured by a visit of the Queen to his country house in the autumn following, was specially named by her in the speech from the throne in December, and promoted to be Treasurer of the Household a year after.

(2) *Do you see yonder cloud?*—Hamlet's last conversation with Polonius was near midnight, just before he murdered him. The chamberlain enters to conduct him to the queen's closet, and Hamlet, instead of answering to the business, directs his attention to a cloud in the sky: the scene is still the auditorium of the play, and was doubtless meant to be the open court of the castle of Elsinore, the castle or palace of Kronborg, in the court of which stage plays were given, according to the account in Braun's *Civitates Orbis*

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

*Terrarum*, which was Shakespeare's source for topographical details<sup>1</sup>:

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in the shape of a camel?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed.

*Ham.* Now, methinks, it's like a weasel.

*Pol.* 'Tis back'd like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or like a whale?

*Pol.* Very like a whale!

This is madness, if one pleases. But the method of it is, that the changing shapes of the cloud in the midnight sky are the phases of the great paternity question, taken in a certain order. The three cloud-shapes are the three *Wills* of the Sonnets. Shakespeare himself is the camel, because he is made to bear the burden; it is the same figure in which Pandarus describes Achilles to Cressida in 'Troilus and Cressida.' Lord Pembroke is the weasel, because he slips through. Knollys is the whale, Polonius assenting heartily to that likeness, so that it is left with him as the conclusion of the whole matter by his own inadvertent admission—the awkward monster is stranded. All the beasts in the midnight sky are backed, the weasel's case, which is the least obvious, being alone specially brought out.

At the end of this mysterious dialogue Hamlet says:

'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out  
Contagion to this world; now could I drink hot blood,  
And do such bitter business as the day  
Would quake to look on.

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv. No. 26. "Area tam spaciosa ac lata . . . in qua, institutis theatris et scenis, comoediae exhiberi." The suggestion of the fencing-match may have come from the "solemnia hastarum ludicra institui possunt : torneumata vocant, in quibus cataphracti, hastas vibrare, simulato et ludicro conflictu ad exercitia equestria informari solent." The original suggestion of the fencing-match came from the equestrian feats of the gentleman of Normandy, Lamond, who had been at the castle of Elsinore two months before (IV. vii. 82). The "platform" of the castle of Kronborg is shown best in another plate, vol. v. No. 33.

## GENERATIO EQUIVOCA

These thoughts have been put into his mind by Polonius, whom his eye follows in his exit ; he is the object of them ; it is the foregoing parable of the cloud that explains the sequence of the thought. And the very next deed is the murder, not of the king (who is let off ostensibly because he is at his prayers) but of Polonius.

(3) *For, if the sun breed maggots, etc.*—There was interpolated into the text of the second quarto the following fragment of dialogue between Hamlet and Polonius at their first interview, which is the only real addition made to the part of Polonius in the revision of the play :

*Ham.* [Reading from a book] “For, if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,”—Have you a daughter ?

*Pol.* I have, my lord.

*Ham.* Let her not walk i’ the sun ; conception is a blessing ; but as your daughter may conceive—friend, look to’t.

*Pol.* [Aside] How say you by that ? Still harping on my daughter.

Polonius is perhaps too bewildered by the abruptness and astounding substance of the innuendo to see the point of it, which is, that he must not be surprised if Ophelia should conceive by spontaneous generation. That is, of course, the only possible meaning of the maggots bred by the sun in a dead dog ; it is the well-known scientific doctrine of *generatio equivoca*, applied to a case in which the insinuation is that the paternity was equivocal. It is a very pointed form of irony, and shows what a deep person Hamlet was when he most seemed mad. The full meaning of the innuendo will appear when we come to the part of Ophelia.

In order to carry out his own private purpose under cover of the conventional Revenge of Hamlet, Shakespeare formally adopts and announces a principle of “indirection,” which is an English name for the

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Eironie or Irony of the Greeks. It is given to Polonius to expound, as if it were the peculiar wisdom of that self-satisfied politician :

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,  
With windlasses and with assays of bias,  
By indirections find directions out.

But it is clear from another passage of the first quarto that Hamlet was the superior of Polonius at his own game. Polonius is made to say :

By heaven, 'tis as proper for our age to cast  
Beyond ourselves as 'tis for the younger sort  
To leave their wantonness. Well,  
I am sorry that I was so rash.

The whole meaning of Hamlet's treatment of Polonius is, that he takes the measure of him and holds him safe in the matter of policy at every turn. Polonius is ironically made the exponent of the principle of "indirection," as if he were a master of the art ; but nearly every one in the piece is infected with "indirection," or caught in the vortices of it ; and Hamlet is the controlling spirit of it all. In sympathy with his own oblique pursuit of Polonius, which is the central indirection, the principle of irony or dissimulation turns up from point to point all through the play (as I shall show in detail), and is very obvious in the various catastrophes—Rosencrantz and Guildenstern the bearers of their own death-warrant, Gertrude poisoned by the cup meant for Hamlet, Laertes killed by his own foil ; even Horatio is ironical at the very last, for he promises to vindicate Hamlet, and to clear up the whole imbroglio, in a speech which he is to make after the fall of the curtain. In keeping with the indirection or irony of the action, and (as I shall contend) also of the dialogue in places, Hamlet is made to carry on a philosophic commentary or chorus, whereby everything is shown to be out of joint and perverse in human affairs at large.

## SYSTEMATIC IRONY

Although the principle of indirection is adhered to so closely all through the play that the author may seem to have conceived the complete idea of a Tragedy of Errors, yet it is probable that it began in his mind with the necessity of masking the animus against Polonius. That moment which Goethe imagines, when the spirit of the whole presented itself to the author's mind as a pure gift from above, was when he realised the vivid scene in the old legend of Hamlet where the hidden counsellor is murdered in a bye-stroke of barbaric contempt. He saw that it was the most dramatic moment in the whole story ; and as it was just what he wanted for a purpose of revenge all alive and real in his own imagination if not in his moral feelings, he made it the climax of his tragedy. Everything in it leads up to the murder of Polonius, and the spirit of the action stops automatically at that point. All the critics since Goethe's time have perceived that the climax is at the end of the third Act, and that the action drags through the remaining two Acts, needing to be worked up artificially to a new catastrophe by means of the fencing-match.

The same principle of indirection is the cause of that reluctance on Hamlet's part to avenge his father, which has provided so inexhaustible matter for critics and apologists. Hamlet is made to suggest an irresolute mind in soliloquy ; but there is not a trace of irresolution in his actions at large. Except in the executing of vengeance on the king, he is always a prompt and effective person — in encountering the Ghost, in engaging the players and adapting the play, in whipping out his rapier to kill Polonius, in changing the letters carried by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to England, in jumping on board the pirate, in coming forward to meet Laertes at the funeral of Ophelia, and in accepting the challenge to fence with him ; while his demeanour towards Ophelia on the three occasions when he meets her is so brusque or peremptory that he is

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accounted mad. So far from being a mooning philosopher, he knows by intuition and acts upon impulse, with a quick wit and a masterful spirit, declaring himself to be “very proud, revengeful [originally “disdainful”], ambitious.”

The best proof that his pursuit of Claudius was a pretence or a cloak for his pursuit of Polonius, is that the author found it impossible to keep up the pretence after Polonius was killed. It appears that he tried to do so, but ultimately thought better of it, and allowed the revenge upon Claudius to fade out of sight. After the murder of Polonius, while Hamlet is still admonishing his mother, the Ghost rises to remind him of what he had forgotten :

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by  
The important acting of your dread command ?  
O, say !

*Ghost.* Do not forget : this visitation  
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

After the murder of Polonius becomes known, everything is hurried to get Hamlet shipped off to England ; but he takes the earliest opportunity, when he is on his way to embark, to dismiss Rosencrantz and Guildenstern for a few minutes, and to deliver himself of the famous soliloquy of the fourth Act (in the second quarto, but omitted in the folio) :

How all occasions do inform against me,  
And spur my dull revenge ;

ending with the resolution :

O, from this time forth,  
My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth.

But his thoughts were *not* bloody ; even the fresh treachery of Claudius against his own life stirs him merely to a deliberative conference with Horatio in the fifth Act :

## POLONIUS THE OBJECT

Is't not perfect conscience  
To quit him with this arm, and is't not to be damn'd  
To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil? . . .

—a passage of twelve lines introduced into the folio text, of course by the author himself, to replace the bloody-thoughts soliloquy which he found it expedient to strike out. This soliloquy contains some of the finest lines in the play, some of those gnomic sayings which have passed into universal currency. Editors have therefore been reluctant to sacrifice the speech, and have invented a theory that its omission from the folio was a blunder of Heminge and Condell, forgetting that the later conversation with Horatio upon the same subject was inserted in its place as more appropriate to Hamlet's mood and bearing throughout the rest of the play. Thus in the end Shakespeare was honest to his own private purpose by dropping Hamlet's talk of revenge for his father's death in all his later speeches, having dropped the ironical madness from his demeanour. All the fierce mutterings of bloody, bawdy, lecherous, incestuous, treacherous villain come to an end automatically after the third Act. When Hamlet reappears after his abortive voyage, he enters, says one, like a man who has just come through a sharp illness and is in the placid mood of convalescence: he has forgotten about the Ghost, about Claudius, and (says another of the distinguished *Blackwood* critics) even about Ophelia. And indeed he *had* escaped from a frightful tension of the nerves when he delivered himself of that prompt and vigorous sword-thrust through the arras. Only once after that does he relapse for a moment, when he outbids Laertes by ranting in the grave of Ophelia; and then, he explains, he had forgot himself.

The action culminates in the murder of Polonius, as the critics cannot fail to see; and the reason why it culminates there is, that Hamlet has fulfilled his self-

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

appointed task, and does not care to conceal the fact by his bearing throughout the rest of the piece. It would surely not have been impossible to have resumed the main current of the revenge, after the unfortunate contretemps with Polonius, and to have made it to grow in volume and velocity until King Claudius was encountered face to face in a final scene and dispatched in a manner suited to his crime and to the solemnity of the Ghost's behests. But there is no attempt whatever made to follow that purpose. The two last Acts are needed for an altogether different purpose—the elegy of Ophelia ; and the elegy upon Ophelia is absolutely homogeneous with the revenge upon Polonius. Claudius, Gertrude, and Laertes play important parts in helping forward the action ; but they are hardly ever suffered to interest us on their own account. There are just three complete and consistent parts in the play—Hamlet, Polonius, and Ophelia ; and the greatest of these is Ophelia.

The main “indirection,” then, of the tragedy was the revenge upon Polonius, all the while that the conventional revenge upon Claudius seemed to be in hand. But this oblique or ironical purpose involved many other “windlasses and assays of bias,” so that indirections meet us everywhere.

Nothing in the whole play shows better the author's ironical and ambiguous method and purpose than the first line which Hamlet speaks :

A little more than kin and less than kind.

It is a carefully constructed riddle, which had been thought out in the interval between the first quarto and the second (in which it is interpolated). It is a riddle both in form and in substance, and is *the* riddle of the play, the answer to which, if we can find it, should explain the mystery. The emphasis falls upon the last word, “kind,” which must be the substantive meaning “nature,” as it always does in Old English—“a little

## THE OPENING ENIGMA

more than kin and less than nature." Hamlet appears to be commenting in an aside upon the gracious words of Claudius, just spoken :

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

and he is supposed to mean that Claudius, as at once his uncle and his step-father, is somehow more than kin to him and less than kind. As in many other instances of irony in the play, the apparent or surface meaning has a sufficient sense in a vague and not very pointed way, and why seek farther? The reason for going deeper is that the line is plainly meant to be a riddle, and that Hamlet is giving out the keynote of that cunning or affected madness which he practises throughout until he embarks for England. Let us break up the riddle into its elements. What is more than kin? What is less than kind (*i.e.* nature)? Strictly, there is only one relationship more than kin, and that is the parental and filial : a child is not kin, but, as Prospero says of Miranda, "a thrid of mine own life." The riddle has an important adverb, "*a little* more than kin," the qualification certainly meaning something ironical. Again, there is strictly only one relationship of the sexes less than kind, or nature, and that is some form or degree of incest. The vaguely sufficient sense is, that Claudius and Gertrude were married, and become "one flesh" as Hamlet says, which is "more than kin" by rite and covenant. Again, the relationship between them (and of Hamlet to Claudius) was "less than nature," because Gertrude had been his brother's wife. The deep and ironical sense looks away from Claudius and Gertrude altogether, and glances obliquely at two persons who are of the company, but not the prominent figures in it, namely, Polonius and Ophelia. Hamlet delivers his riddle upon the cue of "my son"; so that it is arbitrary, fanciful, or what not, to seek any other context for it. It may be objected further that Hamlet must have had second sight to have divined at that stage

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

what came to his knowledge only in the course of the second Act. But it is to be remarked that the first quarto is consistent in omitting both the opening riddle and the corresponding irony of the sun breeding maggots ; these were both interpolated without strict regard to consistency, as often happens with interpolations. The one is a riddle of spontaneous generation ; the other of something equally paradoxical or impossible; and neither, therefore, is capable of being construed in a matter-of-fact sense. If the riddle had been like that in the opening scene of 'Pericles' (which is not Shakespeare's own), it would have been a scarcely disguised brutal admission of incest between a father and daughter, with the same pun upon "kind" in the one as upon "kindness" in the other. In 'Hamlet' the irony is of another quality, and so deep that one feels the hopelessness of trying to prove that it is there at all : it is impossible to forget the "ninety-and-nine just persons who never saw a joke in their lives." If Polonius had not been the father of Ophelia, there would have been the less need for elusive innuendo.

## CLAUDIUS AND GERTRUDE

The same ruling principle of irony or indirection must be applied to explain several puzzling things in the treatment of Claudius and Gertrude, especially the charge of incest which is brought against both with so much passion. In marrying his brother's widow, Claudius was technically in the same situation as Henry VIII. when he married Catharine of Arragon, the widow of Prince Arthur ; and he may be assumed to have obtained a papal dispensation, just as he must be assumed to have succeeded to the crown after a formal election by the Estates of Denmark. He is denounced by Hamlet as a bawdy, lecherous, incestuous villain ; and again as a cutpurse of the empire and the rule who stole the crown and put it in his pocket. If there were not a certain

## AUDIUS AND GERTRUDE

in these charges, they would not be there : Claudius in a sense, while Hamlet's madants for the passion with which they are

Again, as regards the queen his mother, handles so roughly in the closet scene, it is marked that, in the first quarto, she was not the poisoning of her former husband, and that hers her vehement son as if she had nothing in her conscience, concluding at length that aside himself. Yet Hamlet's passion was not in its substance : it was only misdirected in its

Hamlet's chief indignation before he met the Ghost the haste of the second marriage. That may be held to have been a reasonable grievance ; and it is from a curious medical error which has crept into the details of the poisoning, that Shakespeare was thinking of a reprobated historical case—the marriage of Maxwell with the Queen of Scots in May 1567, three months after the murder of Darnley. The effect of the poison is described to have been a sudden loathsome ulcer, or eruption, which overspread or barked about the body like a leprosy. There is no medical authority for such an effect of acute poisoning, or of anything at all like it. It comes obviously from George Buchanan's account of the murder of Darnley, which was published as a pamphlet both in Latin and in French in 1571 and 1572. Darnley was killed by an explosion of gunpowder at Edinburgh. But some two months before that, on leaving Stirling for Glasgow, he was taken on the road with a painful illness, followed by a loathsome eruption. He reached Glasgow, and lay there very ill for several weeks, the Queen visiting him in his sickness. He was then brought to Edinburgh in a very feeble state, and was shortly after blown up. The eventual crime recalled to his partisans the sudden illness after leaving Stirling ; and Buchanan, who was on the side opposed to the Queen, published

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

the belief that it was due "not to the strength of any disease, but to human fraud," and that the pustules were the "indices" of the crime; in other words, it was not blood poisoning, but criminal poisoning.<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lesley, however, says that it was a certain disease, which is sometimes called blood-poisoning; and there is every reason to believe that he was correctly informed. That is Shakespeare's only possible source for the sudden appearance of a loathsome eruption as the effect of "hebona in a vial" poured into the ears of the sleeping king; and as he took the toxicology from Buchanan, so also he may be assumed to have taken the precedent of Queen Mary's hasty marriage with Bothwell. The indecent haste of the marriage is the subject of one soliloquy and of a few sarcasms to Horatio; but as soon as the conferences with the Ghost begin, Hamlet's mind becomes fully possessed by the notion of incest, and his language inflamed to passion-heat. I am bound to confess that I do not see how Claudius deserves it (waiving the point of murder), and I am still more at a loss to understand how Gertrude has merited it except formally. I believe that it was necessary for Hamlet (or rather Shakespeare) to deliver himself of such passionate reprobation, that it was impossible for him, owing to various circumstances, to direct it upon two real persons who had incurred it, morally if not technically, and that the principle of

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan's account is as follows, p. 13 of *De Maria Scotorum Regina*, etc., Lond. 1571 (?). The date is December 1566, and the reference is to Darnley:—"Antequam mille passus Sterilino abisset, tam vehementer dolor simul omnes corporis partes affixit, ut facile appareret non a vi alicujus morbi sed ab humana fraude id profectum. *Cujus fraudis indices*, lientes pustulae cum Glascuam venisset toto corpore eruperunt tanto cum dolore et omnium partium vexatione ut exigua vitae spe duceret spiritum." The resemblance of the poisoning of King Hamlet to the supposed poisoning of Darnley was first pointed out by the Rev. James Plumptre, of Clare Hall, Cambridge, in the Appendix (p. 32) to his *Observations on Hamlet* (1796). He seeks to establish a close correspondence between the characters in the play and the real persons in the Scots tragedy, Claudius being Bothwell, Gertrude Queen Mary, the poisoned king Darnley, Hamlet King James, and the murder of Polonius the murder of Rizzio.

## CLAUDIUS AND GERTRUDE

“indirection” explains why Claudius, behind his back, and the unhappy Gertrude, to her face, are made to carry it off. His mother feels it to be so uncalled-for that she concludes Hamlet to be mad ; he works upon her conscience by his mere vehemence (which was real, but had another source altogether), so that she quits his presence as if cowed, and certainly dumbfounded. The astounding epithets applied to Claudius are all used out of his presence, either in soliloquy or in the dialogue with the queen ; so that the effect of them upon him does not come in question. But as he was “frighted with false fire” by the Murder of Gonzago, one could hardly infer the objective existence of his crimes even if he had broken down, as the queen did, under Hamlet’s direct dealing with him. Claudius and Gertrude, being guilty of the technical sin of incest, are made to appear tainted with every moral enormity as well. The wrath that is poured out upon them because they had laid themselves open formally ought to have fallen upon others who had laid themselves open morally but not technically. One may perceive the irony of ‘Hamlet,’ and yet feel the hopelessness of analysing it according to any rule or precedent. It appears to me to be everywhere, even in making Ophelia the daughter of Polonius ; of which relationship I can give no better explanation, in this hypothesis, than that Shakespeare, for his own private amusement, was trying how many pins he could contrive to stick into the waxen image of Sir William Knollys.

If we leave the question of Claudius’ crimes altogether, and come to his natural qualities of mind and person, we are still pursued by the same principle of indirection. For some reason, it becomes necessary to glorify his predecessor, to compare him with Hyperion, Jove, Mars, and Mercury, while Claudius, as his foil or contrast, is made a satyr. His deceased brother had all the virtues and all the graces, while he has all the vices and all the deformities. The ascription of all this to

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

Hamlet's father is so arbitrary, and the exaggeration so palpable, that Tieck felt obliged to protest that Claudius was not so black as he was painted, nor was his brother so fair. This treatment of King Claudius reaches a climax in the lines beginning :

A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe  
Of your precedent lord ; a vice of kings, etc.

Shakespeare was careless of his ironical secret when he let Hamlet run on like that. How could Claudius be called a buffoon of kings ? in what sense was he a slave ? why is he so infinitesimal a fraction of his brother ? how, when, and where did he steal the crown from a shelf ? did he, in figure or in fact, put the crown in his pocket, did he not wear it on his head ? and, lastly, would any one who has seen him on the stage during the three Acts think of calling him a king of shreds and patches ? And yet Hamlet spoke every one of those sarcasms with a ferocity of scorn and an intensity of conviction which leave no room to doubt that they were meant for some one, and were believed true of some one. They are among the most biting lines that the author ever penned ; and yet they make nonsense for the king in the play. An explanation may be offered as follows :—Having no serious use for Claudius as the object of Hamlet's revenge, he has to provide him with a part which shall keep the conventional lines of the story in appearance, and at the same time be alive with feeling. Under the principle of indirection, irony, or dissimulation, Claudius is made the object of all those suggestions of incest and lechery which pervade the three first Acts. But this single motive does not suffice ; and for the rest Shakespeare goes outside his scheme of the play altogether, having a certain matter in his mind, pertaining to kings and crowns, which he can introduce conveniently. This is his own personal affair of the Laurel Crown, which was then fresh in his mind, and had been recently intro-

## TWO KINGS CONTRASTED

duced into the part of Orlando in ‘As You Like It.’ The whole of this matter has been gone into fully in former chapters ; what concerns us here is, that Shakespeare, ever conscious of his own merits, had been “struck to the quick” by the “high wrongs” of his enemies in depriving him of the royal honours of the poet, so that the vacant crown, if not actually given to another, was destined for another. Therefore when Hamlet, in immortal words, bids the queen “look on this picture and on this” :

See, what a grace was seated on this brow ;  
Hyperion’s curls ; the front of Jove himself ;  
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;  
A station like the herald Mercury  
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill :  
A combination and a form indeed  
Where every god did seem to set his seal,  
To give the world assurance of a man :

—all this is Shakespeare himself, said of himself by himself : it is as far as he ever went in the way of self-apotheosis. Then comes the contrast :

This was your husband. Look you now what follows :  
Here is your husband ; like a mildew’d ear,  
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ? . . .  
. . . What devil was’t  
That thus hath cozen’d you at hoodman-blind ?

He is still running on with intense passion about the king who stole the diadem from a shelf and put it in his pocket, the king “of shreds and patches,” when the Ghost rises ironically at that cue, to remind his ironical son that all this is beside the question. Hamlet is so well aware that he has been preoccupied with another matter, that he blandly anticipates his father’s reproof, and confesses that he is “lapsed in time and passion.” The “king of shreds and patches,” at whose mention the Ghost finds it desirable to appear, is a characteristic instance of Shakespearian wit ; for it may mean either the shreds and patches which were Lord

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

Southampton's share in 'Romeo and Juliet' and some other plays ; or the "locks of wool or shreds from the whole piece," which are here retorted upon the author of that figure, Ben Jonson ; or, thirdly, it may mean his own creation of Claudius himself, inasmuch as he is not one uniform and homogeneous character, but anything and everything that he found occasion to put upon him.

### LAERTES

The part of Laertes is shreds and patches also. In the first quarto, the name is always spelled Leartes, both in the text and in the stage-directions ; so uniformly that it cannot possibly be a misprint. It is obviously one of Shakespeare's numerous coinages, in the form of an anagram or metathesis. The letters make Heartles without H—"heartless without ache," as the substantive meaning pain was then sounded.<sup>1</sup> It was changed to Laertes in the second quarto, under which form we would hardly have looked for an anagram, although it is contained in the letters the same as before. There is some reason to suppose that the author had meant the part originally for Lord Pembroke, in respect of his ungenerous refusal to marry Mistress Fitton. But he had to make Laertes the brother of Ophelia, as he had to make Polonius her father ; and in the result he makes him now one thing, now another, as the action requires, but still with reminiscences of Lord Pembroke in Ophelia's flower-scene and at Ophelia's grave.

In the first quarto, he desires to return to France because he has a presentiment that he had better be out of the way :

Something is there whispers in my heart  
Which makes my mind and spirits bend all for France.

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<sup>1</sup> As late as Kemble, the pronunciation was "the heartidge and the thousand natural shocks."

## LAERTES

This was left out in the revised text, his father's objections to his journey being withdrawn also, although Polonius adverts to them. After cautioning Ophelia to keep her virtue safe locked up (to which she replies wittily that he himself has the key), he is exhibited as having a good time in the gay city of Paris, as Ophelia half expected that he would. He is out of the way during the most stirring scenes, returning upon the news of his father's death. For some reason not easy to divine, he is made to rant a great deal, and at the same time he is as pliable as wax in the king's hands. He is ready to cut Hamlet's throat in the church, but is easily persuaded by the king to adopt treachery ; and, in the second quarto, he is actually made to propose, of his own motion, that the foil should be poisoned. Yet Hamlet, on seeing him for the first time after his absence, thinks of him as "a very noble youth." He rants in the grave, and draws Hamlet into ranting after him. Before the treacherous fencing-match begins, Hamlet has no difficulty in proving to him, by a sophistical speech, that his father's murder was accidental, so that Laertes reserves the point of honour until he is farther advised. He is not without a scruple of conscience about the poisoned weapon when it comes to using it. His last words are to blame the king for everything, and to "exchange forgiveness" with Hamlet, who was nothing loth, having already addressed him in these words :

Hear you, sir :  
What is the reason that you use me thus ?  
I loved you ever ; but it is no matter ;  
Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

The last line is a lapse into his enigmatic manner, and has a meaning only outside the action of the play.

The treachery of Laertes in the fencing-match may have been meant for that breach of faith in the matter of the Poet Laureateship of which Shakespeare accuses

## HAMLET'S REVENGE

Lord Herbert in the 87th Sonnet. His plot with the king is not unlike the arrangement between Sir Oliver and the duke's wrestler to destroy Orlando in 'As You Like It,' which is almost certainly an allegory of the same literary conspiracy (Chapter IX.). But granting that these private or personal motives are used as the sources of inspiration from time to time, it follows that they must spoil the consistency or homogeneity of Laertes, just as they do of Claudius. Both parts are best regarded as composite, and as put to various uses, both in helping forward the action and in serving the author's indirect ironical purposes; so that sometimes they seem to be more of the nature of lay figures than real characters. This becomes especially obvious in the scene where the lunatic Ophelia distributes her flowers.

### NOTE ON THE FIRST QUARTO OF 'HAMLET'

It is usual to include the quarto of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' (1602) and the first quarto of 'Hamlet' (1603) as two of the four plays of which "surreptitious" editions were published. In my opinion these were both published by the author himself (the former with much of the Justice Shallow dialogue omitted, for a reason), and afterwards worked over by him. As I assume this for 'Hamlet' in the text, I ought to give reasons and meet objections.

(1) The prejudice against the first quarto of 'Hamlet' arises mostly from things on the surface. The versification is jumbled, many iambics are incomplete, the spelling and pointing are careless. But these are partly faults of the composing-desk, not necessarily of the MS. copy; and it may be admitted that Shakespeare did not ever correct the press with anything like the care of a modern author. It happens that the text of 'Hamlet' in the folio of 1623 has much the same superficial look of carelessness as the first quarto; the second quarto, which had been in existence for nearly twenty years, would have made a more elegant and more correct text if it had been facsimiled, with the few excisions and additions which the author had made upon it subsequently.

(2) The first quarto contains not only all the action of the tragedy, as we now have it, but also the whole of the enigmatic matter correctly printed, excepting the two or three additions and the slight variations in the order of it, that were introduced into the second quarto. Neither Hamlet's mysterious innuendoes to Polonius and Ophelia, nor Ophelia's riddles in the form of songs and of dis-

## THE FIRST QUARTO

jointed artless talk, are "botched up" at all in the printing, as we know that Ophelia's words were "botched up" by those who heard them. It is hardly possible that this should have been the case, if the original text had been procured "surreptitiously" from short-hand notes or otherwise than from the author's own copy. The text of riddles, snatches of songs, and mad talk must have come direct from the author.

(3) There is one curious misprint in the first quarto which appears to have been composed from Shakespeare's own handwriting—"no planet frikes" for "no planet strikes." This is exactly the same misreading, of "f" for "st," which is found in a corrupt line of 'A Lover's Complaint' (appended to the Sonnets of 1609, and of course composed from the author's MS.). The passage, which is concerned with the idea of virtue being easily defended where it is never assailed, reads thus :

Playing the place which did no forme receive,  
Playing patient sports in unconstrained gyves.

The first "playing" has evidently been "attracted" from the second, and should read "payling," paling or setting a pale round ; and "forme" should read "storme" :

Payling the place which did no storme receive.

And just as Shakespeare's "st" was apt to be mistaken for "f," so his "f" was apt to be mistaken for "p," as in the corrupt line of the same poem :

Love's arms are peace 'gainst rule, 'gainst sense, 'gainst shame ;

where "peace" should be "fence."

(4) The authentic second quarto was issued by the same publisher as the first, Nicholas Ling ; and it is almost certain that James Roberts was the printer of the first (as he was of the second), because it was he who entered the play for copyright the year before it was printed. Again, the second quarto is recognised on its title-page as the legitimate successor of the first—"newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much again as it was."

Against these reasons for authenticity is to be set the curious jumble, in the first quarto, of the soliloquy "To be, or not to be," which has done more to prejudice that copy than it ought. The ideas are the same as in the full text of the second quarto, but there is little attention to rhythm, or even to grammatical construction. No other speech is so "botched up," although some are mere sketches of what they became.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE PASSIVE OPHELIA

OPHELIA is a creation unlike any other in Shakespeare's gallery of women, and unlike any other stage heroine whomsoever. He had just been accused by Ben Jonson of plagiarism ; and as if to show how little his pilferings could have depended upon any lack of originality, he invents a plot and a heroine who defy all ancient or modern rules and precedents. Ophelia is not a character of whom the critics have made much, nor the actresses. Tieck had never seen an Ophelia who satisfied him ; but he had been told that Miss O'Neill was great in the part. A critic in *Blackwood*, who is writing of Irving's revival of 'Hamlet' in 1879, sympathises with Miss Ellen Terry in having to interpret the part of the "submissive little daughter of Polonius." Mrs. Jameson remarks that "she says very little, and what little she does say seems rather intended to hide than reveal the emotions of her heart" ; and then proceeds to discover in her an ideal Ophelia with virtues after her own heart. Goethe confesses that "there is not much to say ; for a few master-strokes complete her character." The anonymous *Blackwood* critic of 1818 and 1833, who is believed to have been Thomas Campbell, is also impressed by her submissiveness, passiveness, and long-suffering, and her neglect by every one at the time when she was found making her way to the presence at Elsinore in her lunacy : even Hamlet is said, by one

## THE TIME-SCHEME OF 'HAMLET'

critic, to have forgotten her very existence until he finds himself accidentally present at her funeral.

Yet Ophelia is the central figure of the tragedy. It is round her that all the action moves. It is to her that everything is subordinated. It is on account of her that the author has calculated and contrived his plot with minute watchfulness at every point. This is seen most strikingly in the time-scheme of the play, which has been the subject of so much criticism. No fewer than four embassies or expeditions are required ; they go out for some object which is not apparent (and has even been pronounced non-existent), and the action has to wait their return. In the first Act, Laertes is sent to Paris, and the ambassadors are sent to Norway. When the second Act begins, there has been a long enough interval for Laertes to need money and letters from his father, and for the ambassadors to have returned from Norway. There has also been time to send to Wittenberg for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. The action then proceeds from day to day until the murder of Polonius. After that crisis in the tragedy, there follow more expeditions, which take time. Hamlet is shipped off to England, encounters pirates two days out, escapes on board the pirate, and after cruising about in her for an uncertain time, is landed on some part of the coast of Denmark, whence he sends sailors with letters ; Horatio comes to him, and the two together arrive at Elsinore in time to witness Ophelia's funeral. We are enabled to measure the length of Hamlet's detention by the pirates by means of another expedition, which coincides with his almost exactly, and cannot be shortened to suit any theory. Fortinbras, Prince of Norway, is met by Hamlet on Danish ground as he is on his way to embark for England ; the Norwegians are on their way to Poland to assert a claim to territory ; they are to get leave to march across Danish territory, they must again take shipping to some Baltic port, make for a part of Poland, finish their campaign, and arrive

## THE PASSIVE OPHELIA

at the Sound on their return to Norway only a day or two, or a few days at most, after Hamlet's reappearance, so that Fortinbras comes in just as the fencing-match ends. The interval between the murder of Polonius and the fresh sequence of events in the last days, which occurs in the play between the fourth and the fifth scene of Act IV., is marked by two other journeys. Laertes is brought back from France. The ship carrying Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to England had arrived there, those two had been put to death, and ambassadors from the English king have reached Elsinore with the news : it looks indeed as if Hamlet had inserted their names in the letter instead of his own, in order that news of the executed commission might be sent back.

The pains taken to impress those two long intervals, which together should cover a space of not less than seven months, are remarkable. It is not one hint that we get, but several on each occasion ; it is not merely by hints that we are led to mark the lapse of time, but by formal journeys, embassies, and military expeditions, the wheels of which go slowly. The action begins when the glow-worm is seen, not later than July, and ends about April following, when the spring flowers are out and the willow is in leaf.

The need for those two long intervals in the action has been so little apparent to the critics, that the author has been blamed for introducing so many expeditions, and suggestions have been made to carry through the plot without them. Goethe's scheme for the reconstruction of the plot of 'Hamlet,' propounded in the fifth Book (chap. iv.) of *Wilhelm Meister* (which was actually carried out for the German stage by Klingemann in 1815), was based upon the assumption that the several journeys and embassies "injure the unity of the piece and are entirely out of place" ; he would therefore cut them all out, and substitute one expedition of the Danish fleet to Norway, which should

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take some time to prepare and be joined by Hamlet, after he learns of his father's murder from the Ghost, so as to secure the allegiance of the army ; the winds are contrary after sailing, and Hamlet returns. Benedix, in a work with a title, *Die Shakespearomanie* (1873), which shows his point of view, finds the delays in the action to be faults of workmanship, and the real cause of Hamlet's shilly-shallying ; he can discover no reason why the five Acts should not proceed straight on until the revenge is accomplished. There is no change of scene, as in 'Othello' from Venice to Cyprus, or as in 'Macbeth' from Inverness and Forres to Dunsinane; but a very easy observance of the unity of place. Why, then, so remarkable a departure from the unity of time ? This is the fundamental question of the plot, the answer to which, if we can find it, will help us to the author's deliberate purpose. It will appear that the two delays in the action are on Ophelia's account.

On the surface it is not apparent why she should cause delay at either point. The less difficult of the two instances is to bring about the loss of her reason after her father's death ; but the assumed blow might just as well have been immediate in its effect. In the earlier interval, Hamlet is supposed by Polonius to have gone mad by degrees for love of her, his lunacy proceeding from a sadness upon being denied access to her, and culminating after a sufficient interval in the madness in which he now raves. That development required time, according to the learned exposition which Polonius gave of its "declension," or its successive phases. But Polonius is made to put us upon a wrong scent ; and in like manner Claudius is made to put us upon a wrong scent by implying that Ophelia went mad on account of her father's death, a view which Laertes appears to share. The death of Polonius was shrouded in hugger-mugger. Not half-a-dozen persons knew the circumstances of it, and Ophelia was not one of them, according to her own words : "They

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say he made a good end." The horror of the crime might conceivably have unhinged her mind, although that has been thought improbable ; but at all events the particular manner of his death had been kept from her. No one knows where she was from the end of the play-scene until she reappears with a crowd round her in her lunacy ; she is lost to view for several months. Her loss of reason must be medically correct, or not an arbitrary invention ; but the poetic meaning of it is, that she is an "afflicted fancy," such as the author described afterwards in the opening of '*A Lover's Complaint.*' She seems to have wandered to the palace alone, and to have been announced to the queen by "a gentleman" in the second quarto, and by Horatio in the folio or final text ; but neither Horatio nor the gentleman knows more than he has gleaned from the crowd at the gate. She has never any woman friend or attendant, as Shakespeare's heroines usually have to give their confidences to ; and now there is no one to explain anything. She is made consistently secretive and demure in the earlier Acts ; so much so that in the narrated scene where Hamlet breaks in upon her sewing in her closet, she is as imperturbable as the Sphinx : in the first quarto he actually feels her pulse to discover whether she is agitated or not. She had a perfect recollection of Hamlet's own agitation, and was able to relate it to her father with a minuteness which speaks volumes for her presence of mind. Here we have one of Shakespeare's master-strokes, correct in art, true to nature : she shows the self-control of women in a marvellous degree, and then her mind snaps with the strain, so that she loses her reason.

But what occasion had she to outface circumstance, to wear a bold front, to be impenetrable ? Her secret is revealed by degrees, and in four different ways : first by the Ghost to Hamlet in an unrecorded interview ; secondly, by Hamlet in three separate innuendoes aimed at herself during the play-scene ; thirdly, by her mad

## OPHELIA'S SECRET

songs, artless talk, and language of flowers ; and lastly, by the churlish priest at her funeral. Avert our eyes as we may, and as all the commentators have done, there is no doubt about the fact : Ophelia had a mishap, she bore a child, and Hamlet was not the father of it. All those embassies and expeditions, for whose return the action must tarry, are needed because Ophelia must await nature's law. The Ghost knows what is impending sooner than any one ; by the time of the play-scene, the pregnancy is sufficiently advanced ; then there is a considerable interval, in which the child comes to the birth, dies, and is buried ; and thereafter everything proceeds to a rapid conclusion. Ophelia's baby was like Mistress Fitton's in respect that it caused a great deal of trouble, influencing the lives of many, although it lived only a very short time.

The aversion from any such reading of the part of Ophelia is nothing less than a phenomenon of the mind. Tieck could not help concluding that Ophelia had been unchaste (with Hamlet, he supposed), and was bold enough to say so ; whereupon an Englishman challenged him to a duel !<sup>1</sup> Tieck's theory of her guilty relations with Hamlet was held also by Ludwig Börne. It is clear that Heine had formed a definite image of her in his mind, but he is more ironical than usual in conveying it to the reader. Goethe held that she was only subjectively unchaste ; tones of desire were ringing secretly through her soul, and hovering on her lips, which found expression in her lunacy. Subjective unchastity is an unpleasant theme, which may be left to Philina in *Wilhelm Meister*. One would not have been sorry if Ophelia's English champion had challenged the author of that aspersion ; for it is not at all creditable to Shakespeare as put upon Ophelia. Moreover, when Goethe plunged his own heroine, Gretchen, into

<sup>1</sup> I give this interesting piece of information on the authority of an essay by Dr. Hirschfeld, of Danzig : "Ophelia, ein poetisches Lebensbild von Shakespeare, zum ersten Male im Lichte ärztlicher Wissenschaft," etc., 1881.

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misfortune, he took good care that her unchastity should be both objective and effective. The one condition upon which maiden unchastity may be brought upon the tragic stage is that it shall have its due fruit in the course of nature ; the situation of the woman becomes at once pathetic ; she is removed from the penumbra of indelicacy into the full light of tragedy. Shakespeare manages the business with the subtlety which was peculiar to him among the playwrights of his time. It affords him scope for his deepest wit, his most dexterous artifices, his most carefully calculated word and phrases, and his most tender feeling towards the weaker sex, according to his rule, *Maxima debetur reverentia puellis.*

I come now to the proofs, which must be minute and systematic according to the importance of the issue.

(1) *Hamlet's information touching Ophelia received from the Ghost.*—The Ghost had shown himself on three nights before Hamlet encountered him ; he was to be met with upon the terrace of the castle perhaps on any night in that season ; and we know, as matter of fact, that he reappeared to Hamlet at the interview with his mother, some two months or longer after his first appearance to him. On the first occasion he began with a remarkable exordium, which cannot be read too closely :

I am thy father's spirit ;  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,  
And for the day confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature  
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part  
And each particular hair to stand on end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine :  
But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list, etc.

## THE GHOST'S TALE

He could unfold a certain tale of horror, were it not that he was forbid to tell secrets out of doors. This is commonly taken to mean a revelation of the pains of purgatory. There does not appear to be any reason for calling that a forbidden secret which had been a common object of the religious imagination for a thousand years, unless the prohibition point pedantically to the Anglican article which condemned the doctrine of purgatory. (Macaulay remarks that Shakespeare defied the article by merely placing the Ghost in purgatory.) Moreover, the words, "I could a tale unfold," mean a tale to be unfolded, and not a description in the manner of Dante. Some colour is given, however, to the notion of a general apocalypse of the nether world by the last line, "But this eternal blazon must not be to ears of flesh and blood." The word "eternal" was introduced into the second quarto, and would have been "infernal" but for the prohibition against profane words, the original phrase having been "this same blazon," which pointed so plainly to the particular tale in question that it was thought better to change it. Again, it is made to appear that something special, or of a different kind, was meant in the opening lines of the speech, by the fact that the Ghost proceeds at once to unfold another tale of horror concerning which he does not appear to have been under any restriction, namely, the secret history of his own murder and of his queen's infidelity. One cannot say that the nature of the forbidden tale of horror is left free from ambiguity: although it is called a tale to be unfolded, yet it is not on the same footing as the tale which he proceeds forthwith to unfold. But it is probable that nothing more than an ambiguous impression is intended. A tale is a tale, a secret is a secret, the horrifying effects of a tale are not the effects of a homily or description, however graphic and impressive. The effects promised from the tale, if it were told, should fix the attention, for two reasons:

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they remind one firstly of the 119th Sonnet, and secondly of the effects which were actually found upon Hamlet on a later occasion when he burst into Ophelia's closet. In the sonnet, Shakespeare was told something by the siren amidst her tears, which made his eyes roll out of their spheres, as in a fit ; which is the same as "make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres." In the scene with Ophelia sewing in her closet, Hamlet came before her presenting the following strange appearance :

Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced ;  
No hat upon his head ; his stockings foul'd,  
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle ;  
Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other,  
And with a look so piteous in purport  
As if he had been loosed out of hell  
To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

The first quarto added a significant hint, which was omitted in the revision, namely, that his silence during the interview was like the silence of midnight :

and parts away,  
Silent as in the midtime of the night.

This, taken with the hint which is retained, "as if he had been loosed out of hell to speak of horrors," points to another interview with the Ghost. Ophelia would not have been sewing in her closet at any time between midnight and cock-crow, but she might well have been so occupied in the morning. The disorder of Hamlet's attire means that he had fallen down in a fit, that his convulsion had broken the points of his doublet and hose, that he had lain for a considerable time in a stupor, had perhaps fallen into a sleep of exhaustion, and on coming to himself in the morning had gone as he was, without even picking up his hat, straight to Ophelia's closet, his face pale as his shirt, his knees knocking together :

## HAMLET'S FIT

He took me by the wrist and held me hard ;  
Then goes he to the length of all his arm ;  
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face  
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so ;  
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,  
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound  
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk  
And end his being : that done, he lets me go :  
And with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes ;  
For out o' doors he went without their help,  
And to the last bended their light on me.

Ophelia was equal to the occasion ; she never winced ; she was so impassive that Hamlet gives her arm an impatient shake, as one does who is baffled. Neither of them spoke a word. It was only when he had gone that she gave way, and went to seek her father :

*Pol.* How now, Ophelia, what's the matter ?  
*Oph.* O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted !  
*Pol.* With what, i' the name of God ?

Hamlet's fit, which broke his points and threw his clothes into disorder, is exactly the same effect that was produced upon Othello when he got proof positive (as he believed) of Desdemona's unchastity. That was undoubtedly an epileptic seizure, although Iago softens the term to "ecstasy" in speaking of it to Othello himself : it was a dreadful convulsion of his whole frame, followed by stupor of indefinite duration. Iago supposed that he had worked Othello's feelings up to the breaking-point. What Othello was led to believe by the fraud of Iago, Hamlet learned on the excellent authority of the Ghost : for some reason his father's spirit was now at liberty to tell the other secret, perhaps because it was nearer to its natural disclosure ; and, as Hamlet was in the habit of walking for hours together in the corridor, it had been easy to find an opportunity. But this was not until some two months after the first revelation, not until the eve of the arrival of the strolling players.

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(2) *Hamlet's innuendoes to Ophelia in the play-scene.* — The play chosen by Hamlet, 'The Murder of Gonzago,' was intended to catch the conscience of the king, to test the truth of the Ghost's story of foul play. But it was prefaced by an old-fashioned dumb-show of puppets, and by a brief prologue, each of which is made the occasion of a few words between Hamlet and Ophelia, being introduced with no other apparent object than to be the pegs on which to hang those singular remarks. Hamlet's first talk with Ophelia, as they take their places in the circle, is frankly brutal, and may be left to explain itself. The dumb-show then proceeds.

*Oph.* Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

*Enter Prologue.*

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

*Oph.* Will he tell us what this show means ?

*Ham.* Ay, or any show that you'll show him ; be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

*Oph.* You are naught, you are naught : I'll mark the play.

This is as it stands in the second quarto, in which the intention is brought out more clearly by substituting "ashamed" for "afeard," and by making Ophelia show her confusion in exclaiming "You are naught, you are naught." She has fallen into the trap of the dumb-show by asking what it meant, forgetting that she was herself a dumb show, and at that very moment trying to conceal her condition by keeping her arms folded across her lap (Hamlet could not have laid his head upon her lap, as he proposed, so long as she was in that guarded attitude). Having found an opening for his innuendo, he presses it home, bidding her not to be ashamed to show ; the players cannot keep counsel, they'll tell all ; this fellow will tell you the meaning of any show that you'll show him. Ophelia is covered with sudden confusion, and turns away from him

## INNUENDOES AT THE PLAY-SCENE

exclaiming " You are naught, you are naught." The dumb-show having served its purpose, to catch the conscience of Ophelia, the play itself comes on, to serve the other purpose of covering the king with confusion,<sup>1</sup> although, strangely enough, Hamlet's exclamation after it is, " Frighted with false fire ! " Before the play is ended, Hamlet takes another opportunity of rallying Ophelia. This time she is prepared for him, answering him in the same spirit of irony in which she is addressed :

*Enter LUCIANUS.*

*Ham.* This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

*Oph.* You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

*Ham.* It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

*Oph.* Still better, and worse.

*Ham.* So you mistake [must take] husbands.

The conversation is substantially the same in the first quarto ; but Hamlet's first answer in it is : " I could interpret *the love you bear* if I saw the puppies dallying " ; and his reply to the " better and worse " of Ophelia is : " So you must take your husband," which brings out clearly the allusion to the marriage service, and at the same time preserves the innuendo if the words " must take " be pronounced so as to resemble " mistake." Nares has pointed out that " the puppets dallying " is " synonymous with *the babies in the eye.*"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is a dumb-show of puppets prefixed to the old plays *Gorboduc* and *Jocasta*; but, as Hunter has pointed out, it is not an anticipation of the play itself. He has found, however, a very curious Danish parallel. In 1688, six thousand Danish troops landed at Hull; among other amusements, they performed a morality or miracle play (Herod, etc.), in a prelude to which "all the postures were shown first." Halliwell-Phillipps was of opinion that the king and queen could have paid no attention to the dumb-show, or they would have seen the plot sooner than they did. It was introduced really for Ophelia's benefit, Hamlet acting as interpreter to her specially.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Beaumont's *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus*, which was published anonymously in 1602, and gave Shakespeare two or three ideas for ' Troilus and Cressida,' contains the notion of images reflected in the eye, and the

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Cognate with this is "the love you bear," which is the same phrase as in the 152nd Sonnet, and means "the child you bear." Cognate with it, also, is Hamlet's answer, "It would cost you *a groaning*" to take off the edge of his jest ; that is to say, "It will remain with you until you are delivered." Ophelia's answer, "Still better, and worse," is explained by Steevens : "Better in regard to the wit of your *double entendre*, but worse in respect to the grossness of your meaning" ; or, with reference to "mistake husbands," it may mean "better for you, and worse for you," which is also the idea of the 119th Sonnet :

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears  
Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within ;  
Applying fears to hopes, and hopes to fears,  
Still losing when I saw myself to win !

The last words that Hamlet ever speaks to Ophelia are, "So you must take [pronounced "mistake"] your husband" ; and it is as possessed by that same notion of conjugal ambiguity in her thoughts that Ophelia reappears next, after a long interval, in which much has happened.<sup>1</sup>

word "dally" in the same context. Hermaphroditus says to the naiad Salmacis :

" How should I love thee when I do espy  
A far more beauteous nymph hid in thy eye ? "

By this the nymph perceived he did espy  
None but himself reflected in her eye.

Thus did she dally long, till at the last  
In her white palm she lock'd his white hand fast.

<sup>1</sup> The behaviour of Hamlet to Ophelia on the three occasions when he meets her (two acted, one narrated) is accounted for in various ways. Shakespeare himself is blamed by Steevens for obscenity and grossness in the play-scene, just as he is blamed for more cryptic forms of the same in the Sonnets. Most critics, however, admit that the author had a legitimate artistic purpose, which was to create the illusion of Hamlet's madness, or to exhibit him as actually mad. This hypothesis is extended by implication to the scene narrated by Ophelia, where the disorder of his dress occurs : it is the disordered dress of a lunatic. It does not appear to have occurred to them that Hamlet is always perfectly well dressed when he is seen on the stage ; that his disarray occurs only once, when it is narrated, not acted (in order that he need not change his dress). One critic who has tried

## INTENTION OF THE SONGS

(3) *The intention of Ophelia's mad songs.*—In the interval her child is born, dies, and is buried. Her father also has met his death. She loses her reason, and in her gentle lunacy she mixes up the two deaths, speaking as if of Polonius when she is thinking of her infant, or passing from the one to the other by those rapid and inconsequent transitions of thought which are peculiar to the insane. By that artifice, true to nature as well as suited to its purpose, the author is enabled to treat a delicate matter with ironical “indirection.”

*Re-enter HORATIO with OPHELIA.*

*Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia ?

*Oph.* [Sings] How should I your true love know  
From another one ?  
By his cockle hat and staff  
And his sandal shoon.

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song ?

*Oph.* Say you ? nay, pray you, mark :  
[Sings] He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone :  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone.

*Queen.* Nay, but Ophelia,—

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.

*Enter KING.*

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.

*Oph.* [Sings] White his shroud as the mountain snow,  
Larded with sweet flowers ;  
Which bewept to the grave did not go  
With true-love showers.

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to account for Hamlet's behaviour to Ophelia on the hypothesis of sanity is L. Feist, *Ueber das Verhältniss Hamlets und Ophelias: eine ästhetische Untersuchung*, 2te Auflage, Bingen-am-Rhein, 1877, pp. 22. Basing upon an idea of Börne's, he maintains that Hamlet's love for Ophelia included a craving for her sympathy in his onerous duties, and that he received a painful shock by the return of his letters and denial of access to her : he found her frivolous when he looked for her support and needed it most. It was a sudden new light to him, whereupon he burst into her closet in a state of agitation, and thereafter treated her with irony and roughness, which were meant to reflect upon himself as well as apply to her. Put yourself in his place as a disillusioned lover, says Feist, and you will understand his conduct in the three successive scenes.

## THE PASSIVE OPHELIA

*King.* How do you, pretty lady?

*Oph.* Well : God 'ild you ! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table !

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :

[*Sings*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window  
To be your Valentine, etc.

*King.* How long hath she been thus ?

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient : but I cannot choose but weep to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it : and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach ! Good night, ladies ; good night, sweet ladies ; good night, good night. [Exit.]

*King.* Follow her close : give good watch I pray you.

[Exit HORATIO.]

O, this is the poison of deep grief: it springs  
All from her father's death.

The first quarto gives the opening of the song :

How should I your true love know  
From another man ?

—thus marking the sex of “true love;” and takes the verse “White his shroud,” etc., second in order. Warburton observes that palmers, or pilgrims, were apt to be involved in love affairs, and in that way he would explain the drift of Ophelia’s gentle raving. Here again, if there be no method in the madness, anything will do. But stage madness is irony, Eironeia, indirection, with which object Ophelia is made to lose her reason, consistently with medical probability. Further, a cockle hat is not a palmer’s bonnet with a scallop shell fastened as a badge in front of it ; it is a hat shaped like a cockle, by which term Shakespeare means elsewhere to include the snail. Hats not unlike cockle shells, that is to say, with a rounded crown, not central as in a “bowler” hat, but thrown well back like the boss of a cockle or the “house” of a snail, and with a peak or

## INTENTION OF THE SONGS

brim like the edge of the shell, are found in the portraits of Elizabethan courtiers ; for example, Fulke Greville, as taken in his youth, is pictured in the third volume of Lodge's *Portraits* wearing a cockle hat. A staff in the hand is also ambiguous, as it might be either a palmer's staff or the white staff of an officer of the royal household. The illusion of the palmer is aided by the sandal shoon. How is Ophelia to know “*your true love*” from another man? By certain marks, which are curiously like those of any palmer, but may have a more particular reference, peradventure it be not made too pointed. “*Your true love*” is addressed to a third party, neither Ophelia nor the supposed palmer : it is the child, and the child's true love (ironical) is its father. How is she to know her child's father from another man? By his cockle hat and his staff, and his sandal shoon. This is the idea of “*mistake husbands*,” which Hamlet left planted in the mind of Ophelia the last time she was seen before her lunacy : she resumes exactly where she left off. Her perplexity is exactly the same as that of Mistress Fitton : the impossibility of finding a father for her child and a “*justification*” for herself.<sup>1</sup>

After the verse upon the ambiguous paternity, the song proceeds to the fate of the infant : its shroud was white as the mountain snow, larded with sweet flowers ; it was carried to the grave unwept, unattended by the “*showers*” of “*true love*,” its father. In all the quartos, and in all the folios, the words are—

Which bewept to the grave did not go  
With true-love showers.

But Pope declared that the negative made nonsense, and struck it out—with the approval of every subsequent

<sup>1</sup> R. G. Latham, M.D., *Two Dissertations on the Hamlet of Saxo-Grammaticus and of Shakespeare*, London, 1872, remarks at p. 146 that “Ophelia's madness consists chiefly in the mistake of one man for another”; and compares it with the case of the gaoler's daughter in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

## THE PASSIVE OPHELIA

editor ! How would Pope have liked to have his own negatives struck out ? The "not" really belongs to "bewept," its displacement being excusable in Ophelia's random thoughts. The meaning of the original text is exactly that of the 124th Sonnet, on the desertion of the unfathered "child of State," which is also unwritten by ungrammatical "showers." The inconsistency of "unbewept" with one of Ophelia's songs in her next scene, is only on the surface :

They bore him barefaced on the bier ;  
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny :  
And in his grave rain'd many a tear :—  
Fare you well, my dove !

This was introduced into the second quarto ; but the past tense, "rain'd many a tear" in his grave, was seen to be misleading, and in the folio text (which also introduces the "Hey nonny" line) the last line was altered thus :

*And on his grave raines many a teare ;*

that is to say, the rain which raineth every day and all day was all the tears that were shed upon the grave. Moreover, the past or imperfect tense, "rained many a tear," was equally untrue of the burial of Polonius, which was "in hugger-mugger." Laertes, on hearing the lines sung, appears to take the reference as to their father :

Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,  
It could not move thus.

But Ophelia had ended with another object in her vacant gaze, to which she throws a kiss or caress, "Fare you well, my dove !" There are two other notable instances of the same rapid change of thought, both of them in her second scene :

His beard was as white as snow,  
All flaxen was his poll :  
He is gone, he is gone,  
And we cast away moan :  
God ha' mercy on his soul !

## HER ARTLESS TALK

A white beard and a flaxen poll are at the opposite extremes of age : the one is her father, the other her infant.<sup>1</sup>

The other confusion of thought between her father and her infant is in the flower-language :

I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died ; they say he made a good end,—

[*Sings*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

The meaning, in the language of floral emblems, of violets withering will be referred to in the next section but one.

(4) *The intention of Ophelia's artless talk.*—Of the two recondite sayings or riddles of the mad Ophelia, one was transferred in the second quarto to a new context, but is otherwise the same in both editions :

*King.* How do you, pretty lady ?

*Oph.* Well : God 'ild you. They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table !

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :

[*Sings*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day, etc.

If they ask you what the story of the owl and the baker's daughter means, it is the sequel to a plain tale of seduction. " You promised me to wed," quoth she. " So I would ha' done," quoth he, " an thou hadst not come to my bed." But he does not express the whole of his reason : it is completed by the story of the owl

<sup>1</sup> It is a question whether Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston had seen the wit of this ; for they (or one of them) made nonsense of the verse in their play *Eastward Ho!* (1605), thus :

His head as white as milk,  
All flaxen was his hair ;  
But now he's dead  
And laid in his bed,  
And never will come again.  
God be at your labour !

Their play contains also a short part for a foolish footman named Hamlet.

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and the baker's daughter. We owe the explanation of that to the excellent antiquary, Francis Douce, whose account of the legend contains the relevant particular, although he has not made the application of it. In Gloucestershire the country folk had a legend, that our Saviour entered a bakery and asked for a loaf. The baker's wife took a large piece of dough to place in the oven, but her thrifty daughter thought a small portion of it would be enough ; when, lo ! as if to rebuke her, the small piece of dough *swelled in the baking* to an enormous size. For her grudging spirit, our Saviour changed her into an owl, fluffy without and meagre within. Ophelia is elliptical in recalling the story by its conclusion only. "Lord, we know what we are," is her subtle comment, "but know not what we may be";—we may change portentously from being "in the oven." Her lover's reason was not merely "an thou hadst not come to my bed," but "an thou hadst not got with child." Herein lies the irony of "we must be patient"—we, the women, are passive in these matters. The irony ends with :

My brother shall know of it : and so I thank you for your good counsel.

The other recondite piece of artless talk was also in the original text of 1603, but was altered in one small but significant particular in the revision of 1604, so as to read as follows :

You must sing *down a-down*, an you call him *a-down-a*. O, how the wheel becomes it ! It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter.

The first quarto has it :

'Tis a' the king's daughter and the false steward ; and if anybody ask you of anything, say you this :

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day, etc.

The song of seduction was transferred in the revised text from that context to her first mad scene, for two reasons : first, that Laertes should not hear it ; and

## HER ARTLESS TALK

secondly, that it might not point so directly the moral of the false steward ; and at the same time “the king’s daughter” becomes “his master’s daughter,” so that the hearers are not led straight to a scandal in the royal household. Another change in the second quarto was the interpolation of the phrase, “O, how the wheel becomes it ! ” The wheel is the refrain or burden of a song, and it was necessary to make it plain that the words “Down-a-down” were the burden of a particular song, which was running in Ophelia’s head as appropriate to the tale of the false steward. It is not far to seek. It is found in Lodge’s *Rosalyn*, the work which Shakespeare had been using a year or two before for the plot of ‘As You Like It.’ Phœbe, a prudent shepherdess, is wooed by the shepherd Montanus, and replies to his ardent sonnet by one of cold disdain and suspicion :

A wonder strange to hear—  
Whilst love in deed and word  
Most faithful did appear,  
False semblance came in place,  
By jealousy attended,  
And with a double face  
Both love and fancy blended :  
Which made the gods forsake,  
And men from fancy fly,  
And maidens scorn a make [mating].  
Forsooth and so will I :  
Down a Down !

Thus Phyllis sang [the wheel] :

*By fancy once distress’d,  
Whoso by foolish love are stung  
Are worthily oppress’d.  
And so sing I with “Down a down.”*

*Are worthily oppress’d*: that is why she says, “O, how the wheel becomes it,” thinking of all that had led to her distressed or “afflicted fancy,” her loss of reason, and recognising that the censorious judgment of the prudent Phyllis was true for herself.

(5) *Ophelia’s language of flowers*.—One of the most

## THE PASSIVE OPHELIA

striking proofs of the author's care for the perfection of his work is the insertion into the text of 'Hamlet,' at some date after he revised the play in the second quarto, of three lines by way of preface to the great scene, the most subtle in all his works, where Ophelia distributes her flowers :

Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine,  
It sends some precious instance of itself  
After the thing it loves.

The lines are tacked on to the speech of Laertes ; but they are not a continuation of his ideas, and might just as well have been spoken by any one else, or more properly by a Chorus. "Nature" here has the same meaning as in "a natural," namely, instinct, without reason, perhaps even without sense-perception, but "fine" or subtle to reach its object.

Love being thus a light to the darkened reason, nature's subtlety sends some precious instance of itself after the loved object, a message to a vanished love seen only in the mind's eye. The instance here is the bestowal of flowers, and the cleverness of "nature" is in the fitness of their mute language to the respective objects. In the first quarto, Ophelia says as she enters, "I a bin gathering of flowers," which she proceeds to give to the three persons present. In the revised edition, the flower-scene is taken second, when she is in a more abstracted mood ; she is now all fancy, recognising no one, seeing only imaginary persons. Delius goes so far as to say that even the flowers which she takes from her lap exist only in her imagination ; which is surely an excess of subjectivity. She gives real flowers to real persons, but she does not recognise the persons to whom she gives the respective emblems, nor does she even distinguish the sex of the queen ; she sees three persons in her mind's eye, to whom she will send a token from her world of fancy, and she goes through the ceremony with as much seriousness and naïve feeling

## HER LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

as if she were putting the flowers into the hands of the very persons whom her fancy sees. But she would have done just the same if they had been lay figures. There is, of course, a certain vague appropriateness in the language of the respective flowers to Laertes, Claudius, and Gertrude (which has been made the most of by the commentators); but the three who are in Ophelia's thoughts are not present in the flesh; they are the three Wills of Shakespeare's Sonnets, the three lovers of Mistress Fitton. To No. 1 she gives rosemary and pansies. Rosemary was the flower always used at funerals, and is here used for remembrance of a dead love. This is Lord Pembroke: his pet name with Shakespeare was my lord Rose (in the Sonnets), and her name was Mary; which give rosemary: "pray you, love, remember" what has been between us. The Fitton flower was the pansy, which for this occasion must signify thoughts (*pensées*). Laertes, as if he knew what was in her thoughts, exclaims, "A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted!" In the first quarto, his words are more heartfelt: "A document in madness! thoughts, remembrance! O God! O God!" To No. 2 (Claudius) she gives fennel and columbines. Fennel means flattery, dissembling. The columbines were added in the second quarto; they mean "cuckolded," from their horn-like nectaries: she gives him horns. Neither emblem has any special relevancy to the king; but to one of the three Wills, namely, Sir William Knollys, they are relevant. In the first quarto, the gift of fennel to No. 2 was followed by a very bold innuendo directly aimed at the same person, which was divided into two in the revised edition, each part being transferred to another context:

*Oph.* There's fennel for you, I would a giv'n you some violets, but they all withered when my father died: alas, they say the owl was a baker's daughter, we see what we are but cannot tell what we shall be. For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

The withered violets symbolise her dead infant (the

## THE PASSIVE OPHELIA

violet being a small pansy), which she would have presented to No. 2 had it lived. Next came the fable of the baker's daughter, with the cognate meaning as explained above; while the whole is completed by the refrain of Bonny sweet Robin.

To No. 3 (Gertrude) she gives rue, and takes some for herself. The appropriateness of rue for the queen is neither greater nor less than that of the other flowers for Laertes and Claudius. The real person in her mind's eye, for whom the rue was meant, was the remaining Will of the Sonnets, Shakespeare himself. This interpretation has a probability of its own, apart from the general theory of Ophelia's flower-language. Just before 'Hamlet' was written, Dekker's *Satiro-mastix* had vindicated Shakespeare's position in the poetic world by making him the king in the play, under the jocular name of William Rufus (which Isaac Disraeli and Gifford have taken in its actual historical sense). He was called William Rufus for his tawny hair, as the Norman king was called so for his red beard; and from the first syllable of the nickname, his floral name becomes in the play Rue or Herb of Grace, while from his real name it becomes Sweet William. These pleasantries are so near in time to Ophelia's language of flowers that we are led to suspect the same destination of the rue on her part. "We may call it herb-grace o' Sundays," says Ophelia. Steevens, who thought it was the function of a critic to pick faults in his author wherever he could, has pointed out here, that herb-grace is one of the common names of rue, therefore its name on weekdays as well as on Sundays. The elucidation of this deep wit is due to Warburton, who is believed to have found the hint of it in another bishop, Jeremy Taylor. Rue, says the latter, was an ingredient of exorcisms, "and from thence, as we suppose, came to be called herb-of-grace." It was in church on Sundays, before the whole congregation, that those exorcising potions were

## HER LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

administered. Shakespeare confesses to an infatuation for his mistress (in Sonnets 147-150) such as, we may suppose, only exorcisms would have been able to drive out. The common meaning of rue is the same as the verb "to rue." Ophelia keeps some for herself, and tells No. 3 that he may wear his with a difference, the figure being from armorial bearings, but the meaning the simple one of the difference between the man and the woman in respect of consequences.

Lastly, she takes up a daisy, saying simply, "There's a daisy," giving it to no one. The meaning is doubtless such as in Robert Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*: "Next them grew the dissembling daisie, to warn such light-o'-love wenches not to trust every false promise that such amorous bachelors make them." But Ophelia gives it to no one: she takes the reflection for herself.

At the end of the distribution of flowers, Laertes is again the Chorus:

Thoughts and affliction, passion, hell itself,  
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Tieck found in this "hell itself" one of his proofs that Ophelia had been proclaiming her unchastity in her lunatic talk. What she was really disclosing was something less gratuitous and more tragic.

The flowers which Ophelia had made into a garland, and was trying to hang upon the willow when she fell into the water, were chosen and named with care, and of course with wit, in the second quarto. They were crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples "which liberal shepherds give a grosser name," the technical name of the common orchid being the anatomical allegory, *Orchis mascula*. Lastly, Laertes prays at her funeral that "from her fair and unpolluted flesh may violets spring." Violets are more small pansies; and the aspiration seems to be, that the person represented by Ophelia might have a legitimate offspring after all—which indeed she had.

## THE PASSIVE OPHELIA

(6) *The declaration of the churlish priest.*—It is still uncertain whether Ophelia drowned herself or fell into the brook by accident ; the grave-digger thought the former ; but the coroner's jury appear to have found it Christian burial ; and the queen's description of her death makes it accidental. Still, “her death was doubtful,” and she was buried with “maimed rites.” According to the churlish priest, the rites, such as they were, had been enlarged through powerful interest overruling the ecclesiastical canons. The first and second quartos are not agreed as to what rite of burial was denied her. In the former the priest replies to Laertes :

My lord, we have done all that lies in us,  
And more than well the church can tolerate :  
She hath had a dirge sung for her maiden soul.

In the second quarto, the dirge for her maiden soul is refused her, but she is allowed other tokens of virginity, to which the churlish priest objects :

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crantz,<sup>1</sup>  
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home  
Of bell and burial.

But he declares that it would be profaning the service of the dead to sing a requiem. It is to be observed that the priest's complaint in both quartos is that she has been buried with the rites due to a chaste virgin. He was clearly of opinion that she was not chaste ; and, as parish priest of Elsinore, he may have had means of knowing. Hamlet inferred from the maimed rites of the funeral that it was a suicide's burial. The priest does not distinguish clearly in his own mind between suicide and the loss of maidenhood. Probably in his parish experiences of young women found

<sup>1</sup> The carrying of a garland or crantz before the corpse of a virgin was an old English custom. Halliwell-Phillipps had information in 1844 of a crantz preserved at St. Alban's Abbey, and of the sexton's tradition that it used to be carried at the funerals of those who died in virginity.

## THE CHURLISH PRIEST'S PROTEST

drowned, the two things were so commonly associated as to be inseparable in his thought.<sup>1</sup>

### HAMLET

After the theory that has been maintained of Shakespeare's private intentions in the play, it hardly needs to be said that Hamlet is the author himself in relation to Mistress Fitton (Ophelia) and to the Comptroller of the Household (Polonius), and in occasional relation to Lord Pembroke, who furnishes some suggestions for the part of Laertes. Hamlet being the author himself in a matter of so private a nature that it can only be treated on the stage with irony and enigma, it is needless to look for some great abstract conception underlying the hero's character and pervading the tragedy : such as Goethe's conception of a soul burdened with a duty too heavy to be borne ; or Werder's, of a man struggling in

<sup>1</sup> The name Ofelia, as it is spelled in the first quarto, has been discovered in the *Arcadia* of Sannazaro, a writer of pastorals in Italian (1504). It is there given to a man, an amorous shepherd. Sannazaro had many imitators, including George of Montemayor, whose *Diana* was known to Shakespeare in an English translation ; but neither in that nor in any of the later pastorals does the name of the shepherd Ofelia occur. It is supposed to be a modification, or corruption, of the Latin man's name Ofella. This is an unlikely source for Shakespeare's feminine name, and would suggest no meaning. A more intelligible source may be suggested as follows : In the years 1599 and 1600 much was heard of the name Ofalie, the native Irish name of a tract of country where much of the fighting in Ireland took place, both under Essex and under his successor Mountjoy ; soldiers returning from the war would speak of Ofalie, and the name became prominent in the charges against Essex. It was the native territory of the O'Connors, which had been brought within the English pale fifty years before, but had reverted time after time to the wild Irish. When it was first conquered by the Earl of Sussex, the eastern part of it was annexed to the old county of Kildare, at that time the western limit of the English pale, while the rest of it was erected into two new counties, King's County and Queen's County, called after Philip and Mary. Ofalie was a wild Irish territory partitioned between three English counties. The aptness of this allegory for Mistress Fitton will be apparent from her relations with the three Wills of the Sonnets. Ofelia is a simple metathesis of Ofalie, a construction on the same lines as Leartes (afterwards Laertes) and Corambis (afterwards Polonius). Ruskin's derivation of it from the Greek starts from the assumption that her brother's name was the Greek Laertes. But it was originally Leartes, which is neither Greek nor anything else.

## HAMLET

a coil of circumstances to make justice have free course on the earth. So far from being abstract, didactic, and harmonised, the theme is personal, empirical, and heterogeneous. The parts with most unity are those of Ophelia and Polonius. Hamlet is always true to the nature of Shakespeare himself, but of himself in more than one of his real situations : indeed, in the same variety of situations that can be followed in his Sonnets, the lyric sequence of which was finished just at the moment when the dramatic situation of Hamlet begins.

Hamlet is, of course, a prince, he could be no less if he were to be the hero of the old Gothic legend ; and, being a prince, it is just as well that he should be the glass of fashion and the mould of form, although so little turns upon that, that he is actually made the antithesis of Hercules in one place and fat in another (probably to suit the physique of Burbage, or of some other actor, who had created the part). There was a well-known rule of Horace for dramatic composition, which Shakespeare was familiar with, namely, that if you take up a character who is legendary, or historical, or has been in plays before, being, as it were, established, as that of Orestes was upon the Attic stage, you should keep to the traditional lines. He has done that with 'Hamlet,' most notably in the particular which has been the subject of so much futile discussion—his madness, or affected madness. The madness is quite clearly in the original legend, and is there quite clearly feigned, being the artifice by which the cunning young Goth succeeds in avenging the blood of his father (slain in a fair faction-fight). The adaptation of this barbaric cunning to his own ironical purpose is among the wonders of Shakespeare's genius. So well has he saved the appearance of the traditional Hamlet, that even Dekker, who was his ally, and perhaps as deep in his literary confidence as most, cites Hamlet in his writings of 1608 and 1609 as the same unaccountable and ranting avenger who was proverbial in the mouths

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of London playgoers, and had been mentioned by Dekker himself once before in a work previous to the production of Shakespeare's play. That stereotyped notion ought to have been displaced or shaken by the profound soliloquies, which were elaborated in the second quarto ; but, on the other hand, the original idea of mad Hamlet was reverted to adroitly in the last Act, by making him rant at the funeral of Ophelia, the tradition of the stage being that Burbage leapt into the grave after Laertes and struggled with him therein, quite in the manner of the Hamlet of Paris Garden who is referred to by Dekker.

In all his set speeches and soliloquies, Hamlet is expressing thoughts and feelings which are proper to Shakespeare, and can be found in the Sonnets or in earlier or subsequent plays. Of the four great soliloquies, the last, in the fourth Act, was struck out in the author's final revision. Two others, "O, that this too too solid flesh," and "To be, or not to be," are upon the theme of suicide, which was no stranger to Shakespeare's thoughts : it can be found in one of the sonnets, and it is introduced into 'King Lear' in so chastened a spirit that we seem to hear the voice of one who had gained the victory over himself :

Men must endure  
Their going hence, even as their coming hither :  
Ripeness is all.

The other soliloquy, "O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I," is also a self-revelation of the author. It is exactly the supine behaviour, in the Sonnets, when he was robbed of his mistress by his friend ; and the same reproduced, as if he would adhere to it and justify it, in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona,' where Valentine is actually called a peasant, in contrast with the high-born arbitrary Proteus, and is made to forgive the wound to his honour as if he had been a primitive Christian turning the other cheek. Equally true of

## HAMLET

Shakespeare the poet, and the necessary complement of his character, is the proud and scornful treatment of his enemies, and the sublime belief in himself, in that most intense and burning outburst, “Look here on this picture and on this.”

Lastly, there are three reminiscences in the play which reveal Shakespeare the man, in the pleasing light of paying pious reverence or willing admiration to the merits of others. The first is of his father, John Shakespeare, who was buried at Stratford on 9th September 1601, about the time when ‘Hamlet’ was under hand :

He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again.

Let us cherish the pious belief that the son wrote in those lines when he came back from his father’s funeral.

Another of Hamlet’s recollections is of Yorick, the king’s jester, whose skull was recognised by the grave-digger :

Alas, poor Yorick ! I knew him, Horatio : a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. . . . Where be your gibes now ? your gambols ? your songs ? your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar ?

This is the greatest comic genius of that age, long remembered after his death like another Grimaldi, Dick Tarleton, whom Shakespeare would have gone to see in his famous part of Derick in the old play of Prince Hal, Sir John Oldcastle, Ned Poins, Gadshill, and others, at the Bull in Bishopsgate, when he came to London in 1587. Tarleton died the next year, on 5th September 1588 (and was buried in St. Leonard’s Church, Shoreditch) ; but “I knew him, Horatio,” and it was something to have known, for even a brief space, a player of so ready wit—a fellow of such infinite jest and excellent fancy. One can believe that he was the first to rouse the enthusiasm of the youth from Stratford, and to fill him with boundless admiration. The tribute to Tarleton

## HIS TRIBUTE TO YORICK

in the graveyard scene, under a name slightly varied from that of his famous part of Derick, is very deliberate. In the first quarto, Yorick's skull had lain in the earth, as near as the grave-digger could remember, "this dozen year," and he bethinks him that it was ever "since our last King Hamlet slew Fortinbrasse in combat." Counting back a round dozen of years from the winter of 1601, and taking the great combat nearest to that limit of time, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, we should arrive at the year, and almost at the month, of Tarleton's death, September 1588. In the second quarto it was thought expedient to make Hamlet quite definitely a man of thirty (although in the first quarto his mother had addressed him "How now, boy"); and as Yorick, the king's jester, had carried the boy prince on his back, it became necessary to add some ten years to the period since the jester's death, making it, in the second edition, "three and twenty years," and to transfer the combat with Fortinbras to another context. The patching in the second quarto is obvious: the original and dominant intention had been to mark the date of Yorick's death, so that he might be identified with Dick Tarleton through his well-known part of Derick.<sup>1</sup>

The third tribute of personal admiration which Shakespeare introduced into 'Hamlet' is the famous compliment to Horatio while they are waiting for the play to begin:

*Ham.* What ho! Horatio!  
*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.  
*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man  
As e'er my conversation coped withal.  
*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—  
*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter:  
For what advancement may I hope from thee

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell-Phillipps is mistaken in supposing that Spenser meant Tarleton by "our pleasant Willy who is dead of late," in his *Tears of the Muses* (1591). It was Sir Philip Sydney who was called Willy, as appears from the elegy upon him in Davison's *Poetical Rhapsodie* (pointed out by Minto). Perhaps the name was suggested by the river of his Arcadia, the Willy near Wilton.

## HAMLET

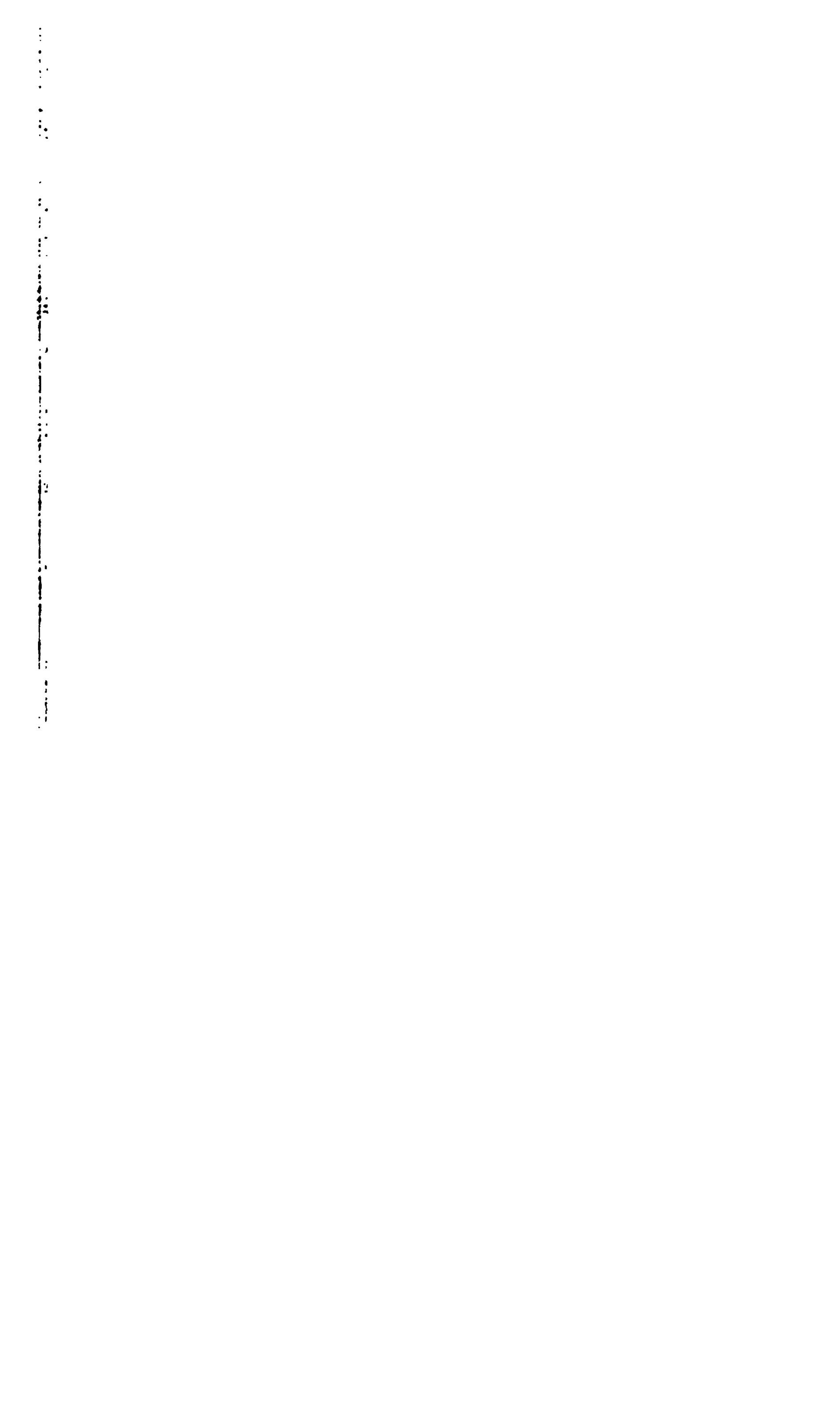
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,  
To feed and clothe thee ? Why should the poor be flattered ?  
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,  
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee  
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear ?  
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice  
And could of men distinguish, her election  
Hath seal'd thee for herself ; for thou hast been  
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,  
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards  
Hast ta'en with equal thanks. . . .

Horatio has little opportunity, in the play, of showing what sterling stuff he is made of : only in the last scene does he get a chance, and proves to be more an antique Roman than a Dane. But for the eulogy paid to him in set terms, we should never have known that he had no revenue but his good spirits to feed and clothe him, that he had had sufferings and had met the buffets of fortune with equanimity, that he was as just a man as Hamlet knew, and that for all those qualities he was Hamlet's dearest friend. Those particulars about Horatio are so much outside the action of the play that, excepting the last, they must be understood of some real person whose attachment to him the author wanted to "pay home," as he repaid the honest old counsellor Gonzalo in 'The Tempest.' One would wish very much to know who this friend of Shakespeare's was. He was certainly a poor man, making a precarious livelihood, doubtless by his pen. There are several things which point to honest Tom Dekker. Among the author's known intimates we may exclude Fletcher as not in all respects the man who is there described. George Chapman was indeed a man who deserved much of the praise given to Horatio, and other praise as well ; but for him, as I believe, was reserved the compliment of standing for the great part of Ulysses. Thomas Heywood must surely have merited the palm for modesty, gentleness, and Christian charity which Lamb has awarded to him ; but he also has been

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honoured elsewhere, in my view, by being made virtually the captain of the ship in ‘*The Tempest*,’ although he was merely boatswain. To the same group of good fellows and honest men belongs Dekker. Ben Jonson, in *The Poetaster* (1601), describes him thus: “His doublet’s a little decayed ; he is otherwise a very simple, honest fellow, sir, one Demetrius, a dresser of plays about the town here.” One of Dekker’s best-known lyrics is “O sweet content,” which is an old theme of Greene’s, but sounds more genuine from Dekker’s mouth, and is precisely the quality most marked in the eulogy of Horatio. It is undoubted that he was in close relations with Shakespeare just before ‘*Hamlet*’ was written ; for his *Satiromastix* expresses so directly the reply on Shakespeare’s behalf to the attack upon him that he has even been conjectured to have written some of the more dignified lines himself.

Such amenities were happily not rare among the old playwrights. “*Detraction*,” says Webster in the preface to one of his plays, “is the sworn friend to ignorance : for mine own part, I have ever truly cherished my good opinion of other men’s worthy labours, especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman, the laboured and understanding works of Master Jonson, the no less worthy compositions of the both worthily excellent Master Beaumont and Master Fletcher ; and lastly (without wrong last to be named) the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakespeare, Master Decker, and Master Heywood, wishing what I write may be read by their light.”



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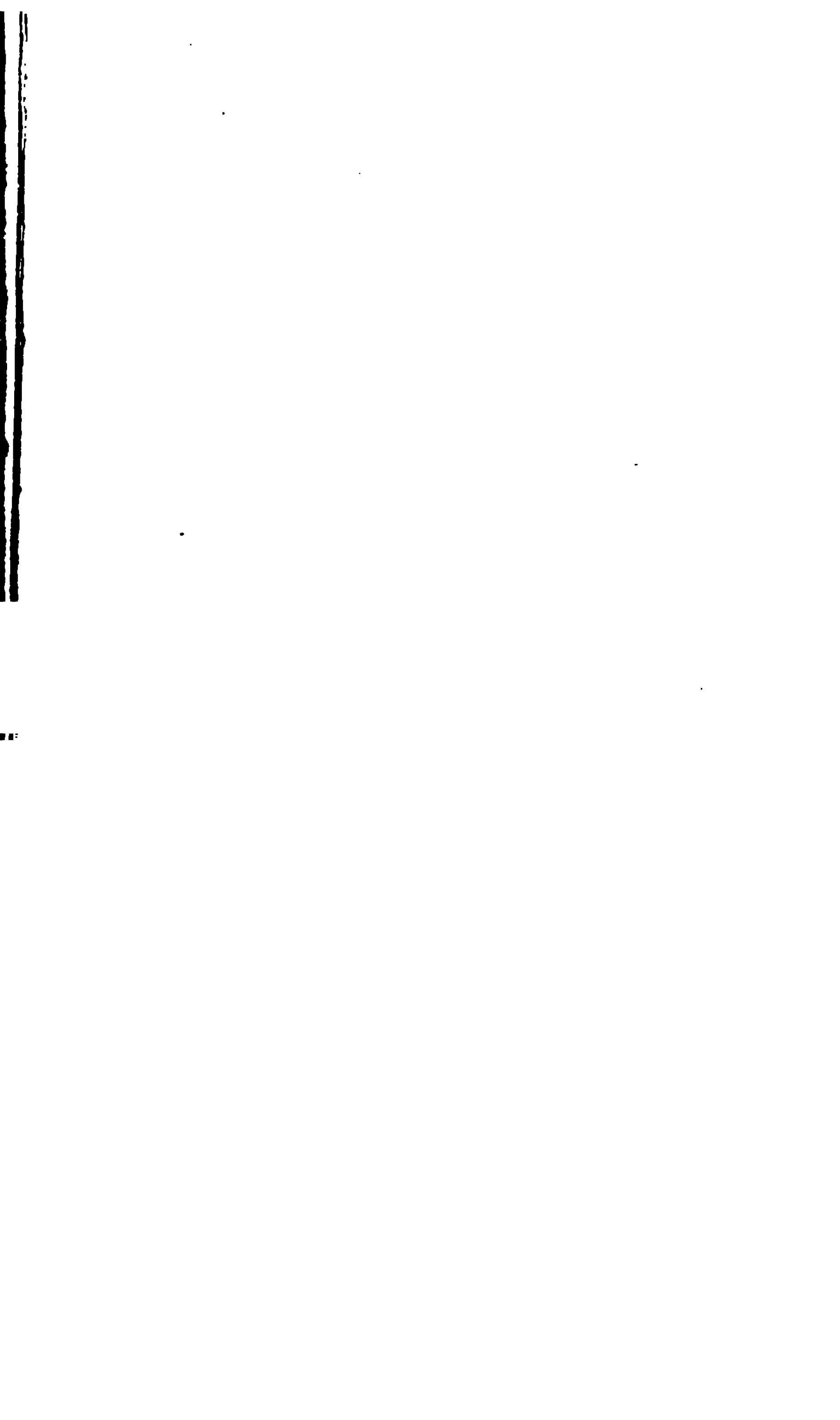
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